



Nº. XIX.

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1833.



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From
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17 March
1920

BOY'S AND GIRL'S LIBRARY.
XVIII.

THE
ORNAMENTS DISCOVERED.
BY MARY HUGHS.



BOY'S AND GIRL'S LIBRARY.

PROSPECTUS.

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PROSPECTUS.

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In fine, the publishers of the "Boy's and Girl's Library" would assure the public that an adequate patronage alone is wanting to induce and enable them to secure the services of the most gifted pens in our country in the proposed publication, and thus to render it altogether worthy of the age and the object which call it forth, and of the countenance which they solicit for it.





THE
ORNAMENTS DISCOVERED
BY

MARY HUGHES.



I search'd the spot and quickly there I found
Hid 'neath their leaves and bending to the ground
Two modest buds

page 80

NEW YORK

J & J. L. WILKINSON, 82 CLIFF ST.

1833



THE
ORNAMENTS DISCOVERED:

A
STORY FOUNDED ON FACTS.

BY MARY HUGHS,

AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARY'S TALES," "THE METAMORPHOSES,"
"THE LIFE OF WILLIAM PENN," &C. &C.

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THE

ORNAMENTS DISCOVERED.

PART THE FIRST.

ON a dark cold night, in the middle of November, as Mr. Hardy was travelling in a stage-coach from London to Norwich, he was roused from a sound sleep, at the end of a stage, by the coachman's opening the door of the carriage, and begging leave to look for a parcel which was in the box under Mr. Hardy's seat. The opening of the door admitted a violent gust of wind and rain, which was very unpleasant to the feelings of the sleeping passengers, and roused them to a consciousness of the situation of those who were on the outside of the vehicle. "I hope, coachman, you have a good thick coat on, to guard you against the cold and wet," said Mr. Hardy.

"I have a very good one, sir," replied the man: "but I have lent it to a poor little girl that we have on the top; for my heart bled for her, poor thing, she had so little clothing to keep her warm."

“A child exposed on the outside of the coach on such a night as this !” exclaimed Mr. Hardy ; “I am sure it would be very wrong of us to let her stay there. Do let us have her in immediately ; it is quite shocking to think of her being in such a situation.”

“Oh no,” cried a gentleman opposite ; “we can do nothing with her here, it is quite out of the question. The coach is already full, and she will be so wet, that we might as well be on the outside ourselves as sit near her. Besides, she is a poor child, in charge of the master of a workhouse, and one does not know what she may have about her.”

“Why, as to that, sir,” replied the coachman, “I believe she is as clean as any child needs to be, though she is rather delicate-looking, poor thing ; but she is a fine little creature, and deserves better fare than she is likely to get where she is going.”

“Let her come in, at any rate,” said Mr. Hardy ; “for, poor or rich, she is equally sensible of cold ; and no one, I am sure, who has a child of his own, can bear the idea of her being so exposed ; and as to her being wet, I will wrap her in my plaid, and take her on my knee, so that no one can feel any inconvenience from it.”

This silenced the gentleman’s objections ; and, the rest of the company agreeing to it, the coach-

man was desired to bring the child in, which he gladly did ; and the dry plaid being rolled about her, Mr. Hardy took her on his knee, and, putting his arm around her waist, clasped her, with benevolence and self-satisfaction, to his breast. "I am afraid you are very cold, my poor little girl," said he.

"I was very cold indeed till the coachman was so good to me as to let me have his coat," replied she, in a very sweet and cheerful voice ; "but you have made me warmer still," she added ; and, as she spoke, she laid her head against the breast of her benevolent friend, and was asleep in a few minutes.

"The coachman showed a great deal of concern for her," said one of the passengers ; "I could hardly have expected so much feeling in the driver of a stage-coach."

"I believe there is much more humanity among the lower classes of people than is generally supposed," replied Mr. Hardy ; "for we seldom meet with one who is deaf to the appeals of childhood or helplessness."

His companion was too sleepy to dispute the point, and the whole party soon sank into the same state of torpor from which this little incident had roused them, and from which they were only occasionally disturbed by the changing of horses, or the

coachmen's applications for their usual fee, till the full dawn of day induced them to shake off their drowsiness.

When Mr. Hardy awoke, he found his little companion was still in a sound sleep, and he thought with satisfaction of the comfortable rest which he had procured for her, with only a very little inconvenience to himself. He was glad, too, that he had interested himself for her, before he saw her; for, had he seen the prepossessing face which he then beheld, he might have suspected that his interference had been prompted by her beauty, as much as occasioned by her distress. She appeared to be about five years old, of a fair complexion, and regular features; but Mr. Hardy was particularly interested with her sensible and expressive countenance, which indicated extreme sweetness of disposition. "What a pity," thought he, as he looked at her, "that so promising a little creature should be confined to the charity of a poor-house, and there reared in vice and ignorance!"

As these thoughts passed across his mind, the little girl awoke, and looked around her, as if at a loss to know where she was: but on the next moment seeming to recollect herself, and looking in Mr. Hardy's face, she returned his kindness by a

smile of satisfaction. "Have you had a good sleep, my dear?" asked he, kindly.

"Yes, sir, I have been sleeping very soundly, and I thought I was at home."

"Where is your home?" asked Mr. Hardy.

"I call where my aunt Jane used to live. my home."

"And where did your aunt Jane live?"

"I do not know what they called the place; but it was at the end of a long lane, and there was a pretty garden before the house. It was such a nice place, I am sure you would like it if you saw it."

"Do you not know the name of the place?"

"No, sir, I do not know what they call it; only that it was aunt Jane's house, and it was near the large town they call Ipswich, where my father lived, and where there were a great many ships and a large river."

Surprised at the easy and proper manner in which this little girl, who bore marks of nothing but the greatest poverty, expressed herself, Mr. Hardy's curiosity was greatly excited, and feeling much interested respecting her, he asked her name.

"My aunt Jane used to call me Fanny Edwin," replied she; "but my new mother told me that I must say my name is Peggy Short, but I do not like that name."

“Why did she tell you to call yourself by that name?” asked Mr. Hardy.

“I cannot tell, sir, for she used to call me Fanny herself, till she took me to the large town that we came from yesterday; and then she called me Peggy, and said I must call myself so.”

“Where is your aunt Jane now? And your new mother, as you call her, where is she gone?”

“My aunt Jane, sir, went away a long time since: she said she was forced to go and leave me; to go to a lady who was ill, that had been very kind to her, but she would come back to me soon, and then I should live with her again, and that I must love her till she came back: and I have loved her all this time very dearly; but she has never come again.” As the child said this, her little heart swelled, and her eyes filled with tears.

“Where did you go when she left you?” inquired Mr. Hardy.

“I went to live with my father; for I had a new mother, my aunt Jane said, who would take care of me. But my father went away in a ship, and my new mother said he was drowned in the sea, and would never come back again, and then she was not very kind to me; not so very kind as my aunt Jane used to be; for my aunt Jane never beat me, but used to take me upon her knee, and tell me pretty

stories, and teach me the way to read them myself, and to sew, that I might learn to be a useful woman ; and used to kiss me, and say she loved me very dearly, when I was a good girl."

"And I hope you were always a good girl," said Mr. Hardy, patting her cheek. A confused blush covered the face of his little companion as he said this.

"No, sir," said she, "I was not always good ; for once I told a story, and my aunt Jane did not love me for a great many days, and I was very unhappy."

"That was indeed naughty ; but you will never tell another story, I trust."

"I hope not," said the child, modestly ; and Mr. Hardy, desirous of knowing something more of her history, asked her again what had become of her mother. "I do not know where she is gone to, but I am afraid she has lost herself, for when we got to the large town, she told me to sit down upon a doorstep till she came back to me, and I sat a very long time till it was quite dark, and I was very cold and hungry, and she never came to me, and I could not help crying ; so the lady heard me that lived in the house, and came to me, and asked me what was the matter ; and when I told her, she took me into

the kitchen, and gave me something to eat, and was very kind to me."

At this simple narrative, the passengers were all much affected, and even the gentleman who had at first opposed her coming into the coach, rubbed his hand across his eyes, and said, "Poor thing,—poor thing;" while Mr. Hardy pressed her more closely towards him, and rejoiced that fortune had enabled him to provide his own daughter with every indulgence that affection could desire. Every thing he saw of this little orphan increased his interest for her; and it was to him a matter of wonder, that a child apparently brought up in the greatest poverty could speak so well, and behave with so much propriety, when turning a little on his seat to alter his posture, the child saw a bun lying against the side of the coach, which Mr. Hardy had bought the evening before of a poor woman, who came to offer some things for sale. "What a nice cake that is," exclaimed she; "how good it looks!"

"Take it, and eat it," said Mr. Hardy. She immediately put it to her mouth; when, recollecting herself, she laid it down again, and said, "I would rather not eat it."

"Why not?" asked Mr. Hardy; "are you not hungry?"

"Yes, I am very hungry, but it is not my cake."

“But it is mine, my good, considerate little girl,” continued he; “and if it were twenty times as good, you should have it for behaving so well. Who taught you to be such an honest little girl?”

“My aunt Jane; for she told me, if I took what did not belong to me, that would be stealing; and then my Father who is in heaven would not love me.”

“You are a very good girl for remembering so well what your aunt Jane told you, and I hope you will never forget such good lessons.”

“Oh no, I will never forget my aunt Jane, but will think of her and love her till she comes back to me again. Do not you wish she would come back? Should not you like to see her?”

“Yes, indeed I should, and I hope I shall have that pleasure; for I will do all I can to find her, and give you back to so kind a friend.”

The expressions of gratitude which were about to be uttered by, and sparkled in the eyes of, the little girl, were interrupted by the stopping of the coach at the inn where they were to breakfast; and Mr. Hardy, taking her by the hand, led her into the parlour to breakfast with him, and called for the man in whose charge she was, to see what further he could learn of the situation of the helpless little traveller. All, however, that the man could tell him

was, that she had been brought to the poor-house in Chelmsford, of which he was the master, by a lady who had taken her in from her door, late the night before ; and as they could not find any one to whom she belonged in that town (for it was supposed the woman she called mother had left her on purpose, and made off immediately), it had been determined by the overseers that he should convey her with him to Ipswich, and there endeavour to find out her friends, or get her into the poor-house there. "This," said the man, "is all that I know about her ; but everybody is taken with her that sees her, she is such a well-behaved child ; and the gentlemen thought that if the friend that she calls her aunt Jane was to be found, it would be a shame not to try to restore her niece to her." To this Mr. Hardy readily agreed, determining, at the same time, not to lose sight of her, but to give that kind of assistance towards bringing her up, in which he feared, from all appearances, even her aunt Jane was very deficient.

"By what name shall I call you?" said Mr. Hardy to his little fellow-traveller, when they were again seated in the coach ; for, though the day had become fine, he would not allow her to be replaced on the outside. "Do you like to be called Fanny or Peggy best?"

“I like best to be called Fanny, because my aunt Jane said that was my name ; besides,” said she, “if I am not called Fanny, the pretty hymn that she taught me would not suit me so well.”

“I should like to hear that hymn,” said Mr. Hardy.”

“Should you ? then I will sing it to you,” replied Fanny ; “I like very much to sing it, for my aunt Jane taught it me one day when I was very silly, and cried because I saw a little girl with a new frock on, and I had only an old one.” She then, with a sweet voice and artless manner, sang the following simple verses :—

“My Fanny, why should you desire
Gaudy robes and smart attire ?
Grandeur will not make you blest,
Though in gold and silver dress’d.

But if you be kind and mild,
And a good attentive child ;
If you love to serve each friend,
And to all they say attend ;

If Almighty God you love,
And pious and obedient prove ;
Pray to him to make you good,
Nor be ever vain or rude ;

Then, though humble you may be,
Though some may scorn your poverty,
Yet of the good you’ll gain the love,
And your whole life will *happy prove*.”

In this manner she continued to amuse her companions during the whole of their journey ; and had, before the end of it, gained such an interest in Mr. Hardy's heart, that he had determined, if her relations could not be discovered, to take her himself and make her the companion of his only child, a little girl about the same age, whom he was educating at home, under the care of a maiden sister ; for he had lost his wife when Emma was only three months old. He could not but be conscious, however, that the aunt under whom his little darling had been brought up was, in many respects, far inferior to her who had trained the infant mind of the interesting Fanny. So anxious had he become about his little companion, that on their arrival at Ipswich, he determined to await the result of the man's inquiries about her friends, and should they not prove successful, to take her forward with him to Norwich, where he resided. As soon as they had got the necessary refreshment, they set out to the part where, from Fanny's description, they supposed her father had lived, and they soon found, from her knowledge of the place, that they were right. " That is the house that my father lived in," said she, running up to a door. A woman at the same time coming out, looked surprised to see the child. " Why, Fanny, have you got back ?" she exclaimed,

and stooped down and kissed her, in a friendly manner. Mr. Hardy and the poor-house man, of course, immediately applied to her for information about the child's relations. "Why as to them, sir," said she, "I am afraid she has not many of them, nor anybody, poor thing, to take thought about her. Her father was a sailor, but was lost last month on his passage from London; and, poor thing, she was very badly off, for the woman he had married a few months before, though she was a strong, healthy woman, applied to the parish for help to keep the child, and when it was refused, she treated this poor helpless orphan very cruelly. Dear little creature, I dare say she hardly got meat enough to keep life in her; for, when she first came home from her aunt's, she was as healthy a child as could be seen, but she soon lost her good looks, though she never complained, for a better or *prettier-behaved* little creature never lived. At last her mother took it into her head, all at once, to sell the furniture, and go among her own relations; but I forget where she said they lived; so she went off more than a week since, and that is all I know about her. But I am not surprised that she has left the child on the road, to the mercy of whoever will take pity on her, for she was an idle, bad woman."

"The child talks a great deal of an aunt Jane,"

said Mr. Hardy ; “ do you know where she is to be found ? ”

“ I do not wonder at Fanny talking about her,” said the woman ; “ for she certainly was a kind aunt ; though she was what the neighbours called proud, and did not associate with any of them ; but, as I understand, she was forced to go to attend upon a lady who had been very kind to her from a child, and who was ordered abroad for her health.”

“ Then there is no chance of her being met with ? ” said the poor-house man.

“ No, none at all ! ” replied the woman. At these words, poor Fanny, who had listened with great anxiety to what was said of her aunt, burst into tears, and cried bitterly for some time, in spite of all Mr. Hardy’s affectionate soothings. “ Do not cry, my little girl,” said he, kindly taking her hand ; “ keep up your spirits, and you shall go home with me, and be my little Fanny, till your aunt Jane comes back to take care of you. I have a little girl at home just about your age, and you shall go and be a sister to her.” Fanny’s tears gradually dried up, and Mr. Hardy, satisfied that, by taking her home, he should not take her from any one who had a right to, or any anxiety about her ; and the man, very well pleased to be saved any further trouble about her, willingly resigning her over to his care :

they returned to the inn till the coaches were ready which were to convey the man back to Chelmsford, and Mr. Hardy and his little charge forward to Norwich. It was very late when they arrived at their journey's end, and Fanny consequently had been for some hours asleep. Mr. Hardy determined, therefore, as his house was at some distance out of town, to leave her at the inn that night, under the care of the landlady, with whom he was well acquainted. He besides wished to prepare his sister for her reception, before he ventured to introduce his little guest, who, he was aware, laboured under some disadvantages, which to Miss Hardy would appear almost insurmountable to her becoming a companion to their Emma. On his arrival at home, he found his sister sitting up to receive him ; and, after being satisfied about the health of those in whom he was most interested, he soon began the history of his little *protégée*. Miss Hardy, as he expected, made the most violent objection to a child taken off the parish being admitted as the friend and companion of her darling ; but at length, finding her brother fixed in his resolution, she was obliged to yield.

In the morning, little Emma, as soon as she heard that her father was come home, hastened with great glee to welcome his return, and roused him

from his sleep with her caresses ; and he, for some time, forgot every thing in his delight, as he embraced his beloved child after a month's absence.

"How glad I am that you are come home again, papa!" cried Emma, clasping her arms about his neck. "I thought you very long in coming; and I want sadly to know what you have brought me from London."

"What would you like best to have?"

"Why, I should like to have a handsome new frock, or a bonnet, or some lace to put on the frock you bought me lately, or any thing that is pretty."

"Then I think I shall please you, for I have brought you something that is very pretty."

"Have you? Oh what is it, papa?—pray tell me directly, for I wish very much to know."

"Then you shall know. It is a little play-fellow, whom I am sure you will like very much."

"Oh, I dare say you mean a doll," said Emma, in a tone of disappointment.

"No," answered her father, "it is much better than any doll, for it is a play-fellow that you are likely to learn a great deal from; a very charming little girl, and just about your own age."

"A little girl! dear me! And is she very pretty? And has she very smart clothes? I should like to

see her ; for, if she is come from London, I dare say she will be very genteel."

"She has not come from London ; but, for all that, she is very genteel, and very pretty."

"How is she dressed, papa ? Are her clothes very handsome ? Are they much smarter than mine ? But I do not care if they are, for you know I can get some made in the same way."

"She has some of the prettiest *ornaments* about her that I ever saw belong to a little girl."

"Indeed ! and shall you be able to get me any like them, think you, papa ? Did you try when you were in London to match them ? for my aunt says the shops here are the most stupid that can be."

"I had not seen these ornaments when I was in London ; but I have no doubt, if you determine to copy her, you will be able to get some like them, without the aid of the shops in the city."

"I quite long to see her. Where is she, papa ? When will she come ?"

"You and I will go and bring her to breakfast ; so you may go and get ready while I am dressing." Away flew Emma, in great glee, saying, as she went, that she would not tell her aunt any thing about it, but give her a surprise when they brought the stranger home.

All the way as they went, she could do nothing

but ask her father questions about this new companion, and felt the greatest impatience to see how she was dressed. She regretted that she had not a better frock on, and that her bonnet was one which her aunt had condemned her to wear a whole month after she had acknowledged that it was getting rather shabby, from the expectation that her father would bring her one from London.

Fanny, as she awaked in the morning, and found herself again among strangers, was watching with fearful anxiety for the arrival of her kind friend, who, the mistress of the house had told her, would be there early. She was not in the habit of giving an impatient expression to her feelings, and had watched very quietly ; but her delight when she saw him arrive proved how great had been the anxiety of her little breast. She flew down the few steps which divided them, and clasped her arms round his knees with expressions of the most affectionate joy. " Oh, you are come again," cried she ; " I was afraid that you too were gone not to come again."

" No, my little girl," said Mr. Hardy, " you see I am come back, and have brought you another friend ; one who will be a sister to you, as I hope ;" and, joining their hands, desired them to kiss each other. Fanny's little mouth was immediately offered, but Emma's more reluctantly obeyed. She eyed

her new acquaintance with disappointment and disdain; for she had unfortunately been accustomed to judge of people by their dress, more than by any appearance of merit. . On her father's going to speak to the mistress of the house, Emma began to examine Fanny's dress still more narrowly, and found it, to her great mortification, of the very humblest materials. "What a shabby frock this is!" said she; "is it your best?"

"Oh no," answered Fanny, "I have another in this bundle, and it is a better one, for it has never been mended at all."

"What! and are all the clothes you have, in that little parcel? Dear me, how few you must have! But where are the *ornaments* that my papa told me you had?"

"Ornaments!" repeated Fanny, as if at a loss to understand what Emma meant.

"Yes, something very smart and very handsome."

"Oh, I dare say," said Fanny (as if recollecting herself), "it is the straw hat, with the pretty pink ribands, which the lady gave me who was so kind to me the night my mother left me." And away she ran to bring it for Emma to look at. Unfortunately, however, Fanny's ideas of smartness and Emma's differed very widely; for the latter looked with the most perfect contempt on the half-worn hat

and faded ribands which Fanny brought her to look at.

“Only look, papa,” said she to her father, who had just then come back to them, “this hat and these ribands, she says, are the ornaments that you meant.”

“No,” replied Mr. Hardy, “they are not the ornaments that I spoke of; she has some more valuable than any trinkets that can be procured. I will not tell you, however, what I mean; but leave you to find them out yourself. As to her clothes, though they are shabby, it is of little consequence, for yours will fit her exactly; and you will, I am sure, have pleasure in dressing her, when we get home.”

“Oh yes,” said Emma, whose ideas were now turned another way, “I shall like very much indeed to dress her in some of my clothes, and I dare say she will appear very nicely in them: let us make haste home, papa, that I may get her dressed before my aunt comes down stairs.”

“What, have you an aunt?” asked Fanny, whose heart was more alive to the sound of that title than the idea of the smart things she was going to have; “and will she be my aunt too?”

“Yes, I dare say she will,” answered Emma, “and will give you as many nice clothes as she has given me.”

“Oh, how glad I shall be to have an aunt again!” said Fanny, with animation; “I will try to be very good, that she may love me as my aunt Jane did.”

The moment they got home, Emma hastened to equip Fanny suitably for her new character, and was much pleased with her appearance in her new dress. “Does not she appear very pretty, papa? Does not she appear as much like a lady as Miss Lomax? though I have only put her on a frock that my aunt said was too shabby for me to wear any more, only I thought it would do for this morning.”

Fanny looked anxiously for the arrival of the new aunt she had promised herself; but her countenance expressed considerable disappointment on their introduction; for the cold repulsive manner in which she was received, bore little affinity to the tenderness which she had been accustomed to receive from her aunt Jane. “It is a strange fancy, brother,” said Miss Hardy, “to take a child from the poor-house, to be a companion for your daughter; but it will not be long before you repent it, and wish you had taken my advice, for you may depend upon it there is nothing but deceit and falsehood among these low wretches.”

“We will try her, however,” said Mr. Hardy, mildly, “and should you prove to be right, it is easy to restore her to the situation from which she was taken.”

The habits of neatness and gentleness in which the little Fanny had been brought up made her removal into a higher sphere very easy to her ; and as she was very quick in observing, and ready at learning, she soon acquired that ease of manner which an intercourse with genteel society only can give. Her disposition was remarkably cheerful ; and those who saw her only for a short time might think her too volatile to be attentive. Yet she never forgot a commission that was given her, or neglected a lesson she was desired to learn. She had under her aunt Jane's instructions learned to read very prettily, and to have a very good idea of spelling. At her needle, too, she was remarkably ready for her age ; for her aunt Jane, she said, had told her, if she would learn to work well, she should help her to sew for money, with which she could buy more books.

As Mr. Hardy was not a man who liked to make a mere show of liberality, he determined on adopting this little girl, to give her every advantage which he could procure for his own daughter. She therefore immediately commenced the same course of instruction, under the same masters who already attended Emma ; and her facility and diligence in learning soon made up for Emma's previous progress. He made a point, too, that the little girls should at all times

be dressed alike ; apprehensive that any difference might encourage either envy or vanity in his daughter's mind, to which he well knew she was but too much inclined. Against this Miss Hardy frequently and seriously remonstrated ; but when her brother had once formed a resolution, he was not to be easily moved, and in this he was determined.

Though to a slight observer there seemed to be no comparison between the situations in which these two children had been brought up,—the one subjected to poverty, and even comparative want ; while the other had been nursed in the lap of indulgence, and accustomed to the gratification of every wish ; yet there are few who had an opportunity of judging with impartiality of their different habits and dispositions, but would have looked upon the little unprotected Fanny as having been the most fortunate ; and though unintentionally kind, Miss Hardy was in reality so to her, by keeping her in the constant exercise of that patience and forbearance which had been early implanted in her mind. Had she treated Fanny with the same foolish indulgence which she practised towards her niece, it is not to be supposed that a mind so young could have retained its purity, nor would Fanny have escaped from the influence of her example with less injury than Emma had done. But the love of dress,

which was a passion implanted in Emma's mind with the first dawn of thought, and strengthened there by continual indulgence, was only presented to Fanny's in its most displeasing form ; for she could not but notice the frequent rise it gave to feelings of the most displeasing and unamiable nature, and think how much happier she was, who had no other care about what she should put on, than that it should be clean and neat.

Had Fanny been asked, after she had spent five years under Mr. Hardy's roof, how she liked her situation, she would have answered with readiness, and with great sincerity, that she was very happy ; for though many little things were perpetually occurring to mortify and distress her, she was fully sensible of her obligations to her kind friend, and the many advantages which she enjoyed under his protection, and was determined to reward him in the only way in her power, by making the best use of them. .

“What are the little hardships which I have to endure,” she would say to herself ; “in comparison with being provided with food and clothes, and having so good an education bestowed upon me ? It is the least I can do, in return for all this, to bear with Emma's little humours, and to submit with patience to Miss Hardy's unkindness. My benefactor

is always affectionate and good to me, and shall I reward his tenderness by complaining to him of those he loves?"

About the time we are now speaking of, Mr. Hardy came one morning into the room where the little girls were preparing their lessons for their masters, and told them that if they would get them all ready by twelve o'clock, which he knew they could do if they were diligent, he would come at that time, and show them a capital collection of wild beasts which had just come to town. Highly pleased with this proposal, the girls set about their work with great eagerness, but most unfortunately for Emma's tranquillity of temper, Miss Lomax, a young lady with whom she had always had a great competition in dress, passed the window with a very handsome new bonnet on. This was too much to be borne, for she had the day before, when in a shop with her aunt, seen this young lady's mother buy her daughter a very elegant frock, and she was not sure that she had prevailed on her aunt to get her one of the same; but now, with the addition of this bonnet, she was quite sure of being eclipsed, and she became fretful and peevish in proportion as the improbability of her getting such a one arose in her mind,—the consequences of which poor Fanny felt by her quarrelling with her for every thing she did.

“Had not you better attend to your work, Emma?” said Fanny, gently, as her friend hung lounging over the table.

“What right have you to order me?” asked Emma, peevishly.

“I did not mean to order, I was only advising.”

“You have very little right to give me advice ; one would think, from your manner, that *you* were Mr. Hardy’s daughter, and *I* the dependant.”

“Oh, no !” replied Fanny, with extreme sweetness of temper ; “I must appear like the dependant by my anxiety to gain all the good I can ; for I know that my only riches will be the good education which he is so kind as to give me.”

To this even Emma, peevish as she was, could not make a retort, and they went on with their work very quietly till they had got all done but preparing for their drawing and music masters, when Fanny asked which Emma would like to do first ? Emma chose the latter, and Fanny sat down to fix her paper on her drawing-board, which was all that she had to do, and which she had finished long before Emma chose to give up the instrument to her. “I think,” said she, “while I am waiting, I may as well be getting your drawing-board ready.” Emma condescended to give her leave ; but during the course of her operations, if Fanny ventured to remind her

that she could not have time to practise her lesson if she did not let her have the instrument soon, she answered with, "Oh, you soon tire of doing any thing for me ;" or, "I know you do not like me to practise, lest I should play my lesson as well as you do yours." At length, when she saw her drawing prepared, Emma graciously removed from the instrument ; but poor Fanny had scarcely taken her place, and got her book open, before it struck twelve o'clock, and Mr. Hardy almost immediately entered the room.

"Now, my little girls," said he, as he opened the door, "are you ready?"

"I am quite ready, papa," said Emma, coming forward.

"And you, Fanny, what do you say?"—Fanny was silent.

"Have you finished practising, or are you only beginning?"

"I was only beginning, sir."

"Why, how is that?" said Mr. Hardy, with a look of displeasure ; "you must have been very idle then, I am sure ; for you can, if you please, be much quicker than Emma."

"Yes, if she pleases," said Miss Hardy; who just then entered the room ; "but if you knew Fanny as well as I do, you would find her much more capricious

in her pleasing or not pleasing than you suppose her to be ; though she generally has art enough not to let you know it ; but the truth must come out sometimes."

"The only thing then to be done," said Mr. Hardy, "is, that she must stay at home and practise, while Emma and I go to see the show." Here Emma's conscience began to reproach her, and remind her that she had no right to the indulgence which was offered to her. She had only resolution, however, to be half-honest on the occasion, and therefore said, "I had rather, if you please, papa, that you put it off till to-morrow, and give us another trial, and then I dare say we shall both be ready."

"Dear, amiable child!" exclaimed her aunt; "what sweetness of disposition you show in every thing you do!" Emma blushed deeply at this praise; while her aunt, mistaking the cause, proceeded, "But you are so modest, that you cannot bear to hear your own merits spoken of."

"I think," said Mr. Hardy, interrupting his sister, whose unqualified praises he did not approve of, "instead of doing violence to Emma's feelings on this occasion, we had better give her the reward she deserves by complying with her wishes; Fanny may therefore proceed with her practising, and to-

morrow I hope she will be more attentive to my requests."

Emma, by this arrangement, felt satisfied that she had made the necessary amends to Fanny for the effects of her caprice ; and the matter passed over without leaving either a trace of mortification on Emma's mind, or of resentment on that of the amiable Fanny. On the next morning, Emma set to work with diligence to her lessons ; and as Fanny had not the least difficulty in acquiring hers, when not interrupted, or obliged to assist her friend, they were both ready to attend Mr. Hardy at the time appointed, to which also he was very punctual.

On their way to the place, the little girls asked a great many questions about the exhibition which they were going to see. "There are a great variety of very curious animals collected together, which I have no doubt you will have much pleasure in looking at," said Mr. Hardy ; "and I hope a sight of them will serve to make you pursue with greater regard a study which I particularly wish you to cultivate."

"I know you mean natural history," sir, said Fanny ; "for you have often said you wished us to acquire a taste for it."

"I do so," replied Mr. Hardy, "as I consider it one of the most interesting subjects which the mind

can rest upon ; as it is calculated both to enlarge the ideas and improve the heart."

"How can studying the nature of wild, savage animals do that, papa?" inquired Emma.

"By its connexion with religion, my dear," replied her father ; "the study of nature cannot fail to teach this great truth, that there is a God, and that he is boundless in power and infinite in goodness. And though he is beyond the reach of mortal eye, yet we may see, admire, and praise him in his wondrous works. It is not to the mere study of beasts and birds, or plants, that I would wish to confine you ; but would have you to range through the wide field of science, as it lies open to every inquiring mind. It is for this purpose that I have you taught Greek and Latin, that it may tend to make the subjects you enter upon more easy to you. There are many technical terms made use of in science, which is much to be regretted, as they are apt to confuse and terrify the unlearned student, but which are frequently significant, and easy to those who can trace their derivation to the languages from which they are taken.

"But my aunt says, papa, that such kind of things as you are teaching us are not fit for girls to learn."

"Your aunt and I, it is true, differ sometimes in our opinions on this subject ; but I must beg, till you

are of an age to judge for yourselves, that you will be directed by me, in this material point of your education. So far from being improper, it appears to me to be particularly suitable to the female mind, to investigate the laws of nature, and explore her secrets. It must furnish it with a continual and instructive source of amusement; as it not only supplies entertainment for the hours of confinement, but even in the exercise of walking in the fields it would give double interest; for in every object which meets the eye may be discovered something to admire. The meanest plant we tread upon contains an instructive lesson written on its leaves.

‘Not a tree,
A plant, a leaf, a blossom, but contains
A folio volume. We may read, and read,
And read again, and still find something new;
Something to please, and something to instruct,
E’en in the noisome weed.’

“It would be well if females in general, instead of the foolish stories with which their time is at present so much taken up, were to direct their attention more to subjects of natural history. We should then no longer see them start and scream at the sight of a spider, a beetle, or a worm, for in them they would then only see harmless objects of curiosity.”

“Oh, papa!” exclaimed Emma, “I do not think any thing could make me like to look at those nasty creatures.”

“Yes, Emma,” said Fanny, “I do think you would like them, if you were to view them closely, and see how many curious things there are about them. You know those caterpillars that I wished you to look at, the other day in the garden. They all turned quite hard, and seemed as though they were dead, excepting at one end, which moved a little; but Mrs. Ellison told me, if I would bring them into the house, and keep them under a glass, I should then have them safe till I saw what change they went through next. And this morning I found that two or three of them had come out pretty spotted butterflies, such as we so often admire as they fly about.”

They had now arrived at their place of destination; and Mr. Hardy preferred taking the children round to the different animals, and giving them an account of them himself, to following the keeper, and listening to his hurried and unsatisfactory history. The first which attracted their attention was a noble elephant, which Mr. Hardy told them was a native of the wilds of Asia and Africa; and on the children discovering fear in approaching it, “You need not be afraid, my dears,” said he, “of coming

within the reach even of its long trunk ; for though the largest and strongest of all animals, it is at the same time one of the most gentle ; a striking proof of the effect of real superiority in producing gentleness and humility. They are sensible and amiable in their disposition, and seem to have a pleasure in rendering their strength serviceable to their employers."

"But what is that long ugly-looking thing that he throws about in that manner?" asked Emma.

"That," replied her father, "is one of the most complete and extraordinary instruments that nature has bestowed upon any of her wild productions. It is called the trunk or proboscis ; and is at once a nose, a hand, and an instrument of defence. His dexterity, by means of this trunk, is so exquisite, that he will take up the smallest thing with it, and that with such gentleness, that, though he were to pick it from the palm of your hand, you would scarcely be able to feel it."

"I should like to try it," said Fanny, whose courage revived with Mr. Hardy's account.

"You shall do so," replied her friend ; "and you shall also see it open and shut the bolt of its prison-door, and convey food to its mouth, with the same instrument." At that moment a boy, coming up to the elephant, held out his hand towards him, when

the animal, putting forward his trunk to take what was offered, received nothing but a prick with a pin. The creature, very angry at the insult, threw about his trunk in signs of displeasure.

“Oh, fy!” said Fanny; “how could you use him so? How angry you have made him! I should not wonder that, if within his reach, he killed you on the spot.”

“No,” said Mr. Hardy; “if you read the entertaining histories of the elephant, which are to be met with in almost every book of the natural history of quadrupeds, you will find that they, in general, have a much more harmless manner of showing their displeasure.” Before they left the elephant, however, the little girls had an opportunity of witnessing the manner in which he repaid the injury which had been offered him; for the keeper bringing him a bucket of water for the purpose of letting the company see his method of drinking, no sooner were the contents of the bucket drawn into his trunk, than instead of conveying it as was expected to his mouth, it was spouted with great force over the boy who had wantonly taken advantage of his helpless situation,—a piece of retaliation which gave great pleasure to the surrounding observers.

“Here,” said Mr. Hardy, drawing the children forward, who had got so familiar with the elephant,

and were so much amused with its manœuvres, that they were unwilling to leave it,—“here is another animal from the same part of the world, which, though much inferior in size, is much more terrible and dangerous. The lion is a beast of prey, which means, as you know, that it lives on animal instead of vegetable food. Nothing, however, can be more noble and majestic than his appearance. And there have been instances of their showing a strong sense of gratitude and attachment to those from whom they have received kindness.”

“Oh, yes,” said Emma, “I remember one in the story of Androcles and the lion.”

“True,” answered her father; “and there are many others which are equally striking, and perhaps more authentic.”

“Do you not think that story true then, sir?” asked Fanny.

“I cannot pretend to decide as to its truth or otherwise, my dear,” answered Mr. Hardy; “as we ought to be cautious in general of receiving any thing as fact that is not well attested by credible witnesses.”

They then proceeded to admire the extreme beauty of the tiger and leopard, the former of which, Mr. Hardy told them, was principally found in India and the Indian islands; and the latter in Senegal,

Guinea, and most parts of Africa. "You will feel as though you had met with an acquaintance," continued he, going forward to another cage, "when I tell you that this little gentle creature is the lama of South America."

"Oh, yes," cried Fanny, "I like to look at it for Robinson Crusoe's sake."

"You have its history so fully in the New Robinson Crusoe," said Mr. Hardy, "that it is unnecessary for me to enlarge upon it."

"Is there a Lapland reindeer in this collection?" asked Fanny; "I should like much to see one."

"In appearance," replied Mr. Hardy, "it is very similar to our stag; but reindeer cannot be exhibited in this country, for it has been found impossible to keep them alive here. Sir H. Liddell brought some over with him to England, and even brought some Laplanders with them to take care of them; but the animals soon died, and the poor Laplanders themselves pined in misery for their native country."

"Dear me," said Emma, "that is very extraordinary; I should have thought they would have been quite thankful to get away from so dreary a country. I am sure if I had been born there, I should soon have died of misery."

"Had Providence placed you in such a situation,

my dear Emma, it would have given you habits and dispositions suited to it. If the native of Lapland be less favoured in the outward gifts of nature, he enjoys in their stead a degree of innocence and contentment of mind which the inhabitants of more favoured countries might envy. The gracious Power which formed us has kindly implanted in our natures a love of our country, an attachment to what we are most accustomed to, which makes up for every deficiency on the score of comfort it may possess ; and I have no doubt that the rude but innocent life of the inhabitant of these gloomy regions is as dear to him as to the most polished European. Thomson describes, in a very beautiful manner, the simple and harmless lives of these children of nature, in lines which I will show you when we go home." In this manner Mr. Hardy continued to conduct his young companions round to the different animals within their reach, contriving by some lively anecdote or judicious reflection to interest their feelings, while he increased their knowledge ; till at length, fatigued in body, though delighted in mind, they returned home to a late dinner.

"It is well," said Miss Hardy to the little girls on their complaining of being tired, "that the invitation which came for you this morning was for to-morrow

afternoon instead of this, for you would have been too much fatigued to enjoy yourselves."

"An invitation, aunt! Where are we invited to?" asked Emma.

"To Mrs. Ellison's," replied Miss Hardy, "where there is to be a large party of young people."

"Indeed! then I dare say Miss Lomax will be there, and I should not wonder if she has that handsome new frock on which her mamma bought her the other day."

"Well, no matter," returned Miss Hardy, "suppose she has, I have no doubt but you will appear as well as she does, meet when you may."

"And I am sure," rejoined Mr. Hardy, "that Emma will appear a great deal better if she will but keep herself free from affectation; for that, unfortunately, spoils Miss Lomax's appearance most sadly."

"Everybody says she spoils all her fine clothes by appearing so conceited in them," said Emma, with an air of triumph.

"Take care then, my dear," said her father, "to avoid her error, and not to set too high a value on mere external appearance."

Emma's philosophy was not equal to this; for dress, unfortunately for her was the most important

object in life ; and a frock, or a hat, had at any time the power of destroying or constituting her enjoyment. Unhappily, too, for her, she was encouraged in her weakness by the still more inexcusable folly of her aunt. This important visit, with the probabilities of who should be there, and how they should be dressed, employed her thoughts incessantly. "I wonder, aunt," said she, when alone with Miss Hardy, "I wonder what kind of frock Miss Lomax will have on,—do not you?"

"No, I do not wonder much about it," replied her aunt, "for I have no doubt but she will be dressed in that which her mamma bought her the other day. And I can tell you what you will have on, too, if you wish to know."

Emma looked at her with anxiety. "What shall I have on, aunt?"

"One exactly the same," replied Miss Hardy.

"Indeed! and have you really got me one? How good you are! How very kind it is of you! Oh! it will be such a surprise to Miss Lomax; when she is expecting to see me mortified at the sight of her elegant frock, to find that I have one exactly the same. But," cried Emma, changing her countenance in an instant, "I am afraid, aunt, my papa will not allow me to wear it, unless Fanny has one too."

"It is quite out of the question," replied Miss Hardy, "for Fanny to have one ; it is by far too expensive. Indeed, I dare say he would be very angry if he knew I had paid so much for any frock as this cost, so that I do not intend to let him know it."

"Then what is to be done ? How am I to wear it ?" asked Emma, trembling between hope and fear.

"Why, my plan is," replied her aunt, "to dress you both in plain muslin frocks to go there with, as it is likely to be a damp evening, and to send Nanny along with you ; for I shall tell your papa that it is not fit for you to walk so far in thin frocks, and then you know Fanny's spotted muslin may be put up for her, and you may have your new one ; for you are very sure that Fanny will not say a word about the difference, if she should even observe it ; but she is so stupid, that if her frock be but clean and whole, she never minds any thing more." Emma was delighted beyond measure at this arrangement, nor once gave herself time to consider that she was deceiving her father for the paltry gratification of wearing a frock a little finer than common.

At length the time for dressing arrived, and Nanny came to help them, and to put up their frocks to take with them. "What a pity it is, Miss Emma," said she, as she was assisting her young mistress,

that your aunt should make you wear so many petticoats ! do you know Miss Lomax only wears one, and you have always two ?”

“ Yes, indeed it is very mortifying,” said Emma, “ for nobody wears any more than one now, and we always appear such bunches beside other people. I have a great mind not to put on any more than one. Fanny, will you leave your under-petticoat off, and I will do the same ?”

“ No, indeed,” answered Fanny, “ I will not leave off mine, for I am sure your aunt would be very angry ; besides it would give us cold, on such a damp evening as this is, particularly as we are going to put on thin frocks.” As she spoke, Fanny took up the disputed petticoat and put it on ; but Emma, who was seized with horror at the idea of being a thick, bunchy figure, when everybody else was thin and shapely, was about to persuade her again, when Nanny gave her a hint not to say any thing more on the subject ; and Fanny, just then going into another room for something she wanted, Nanny told Emma that Fanny had made a mistake, and had put on her petticoat instead of her own, so that she might venture to go without ; for if her aunt should find out that only one of the petticoats had been worn, she would think, from the mark, that it was Fanny who had left hers behind. This was agreed

to, and the business of dressing being finished, they hastened with great glee to pay the wished-for visit ; Fanny delighted to visit Mrs. Ellison, who had always been particularly kind to her, and Emma eager to display her finery.

But, alas ! those whose pleasures depend upon such trifling circumstances must expect to meet with frequent disappointments and mortifications ; and such was the case with poor Emma ; for the moment she entered the room, she discovered that Miss Lomax had indeed the expected frock on, but in addition to its other beauties, it was trimmed round the bosom and sleeves with very elegant lace, and hers, alas ! was quite plain. In an instant a cloud overshadowed her brow ; and Fanny, who had observed the circumstance of the frock, though without the slightest degree of ill-humour on the occasion, in vain endeavoured to find out what it was that had so suddenly changed the expression of her friend's countenance. Desirous, from whatever cause it might arise, to dissipate the gloom, she called her to come and look at a very beautiful collection of paintings of insects, which Mrs. Ellison had laid upon a table as an amusement to her young visitors.

“Is there nothing but insects ?” asked Emma, turning over the papers carelessly.

“I believe not,” replied Fanny; “but they are very beautiful, and all magnified, so that we may see exactly how they are formed, and it is very curious to examine them. Look here; in these that are called the first class, there are a great many of our acquaintances; for here are the spider, the flea, the bug, and—”

“Indeed,” cried Emma, interrupting her in an angry tone; for, as usual, she felt inclined to vent her ill-humour on Fanny, however innocent she might be of the cause. “I beg you will not call them my acquaintances, for I know nothing of such filthy things; you may, perhaps, know them better, for it is likely you were a great deal in the way of seeing them when you lived with your aunt Jane.”

“If you mean by that,” replied Fanny, with more warmth than she would have shown at an accusation, however severe, against herself, “that my aunt Jane was a dirty woman, you are very much mistaken, Emma, for she was as clean and as particular as the most delicate lady could be. Though her clothes were poor, they were always clean; so that I had no more chance of knowing any thing of these creatures with her than at any other time. I have, however, seen them sometimes, and when they came in my way, have looked at them from curiosity, as I knew them to be often troublesome in houses.”

“I hope you have done with your long explanations,” said Emma, in a contemptuous tone, when Fanny ceased speaking, “and your vindication of your aunt’s gentility ; for nobody can doubt, from the dress that my papa first brought you to Norwich in, that she was a very genteel woman.”

“She was not rich,” answered Fanny, “but by all that I can recollect of her, and from what I have since seen of other people, she was, I am sure, genteel ; for she was gentle, kind, and obliging.—But come,” added she, recollecting that she had spoken in rather an angry tone, “I think we had better *look* at the pictures than *quarrel* about them. I wonder what is the meaning of their being divided into first, second, third, and fourth classes.”

“Do you not know, Fanny,” said Mrs. Ellison, who, unknown to them, had been near enough to the little girls to hear their conversation, and was much pleased with Fanny’s generous warmth in vindicating her aunt, as well as the manner she had checked herself as soon as she recollected that she had been warm, “that all animals are divided into classes and orders (for the purpose of assisting the inquirer), according to the particular distinctions which characterize them ? The word insect is, therefore, a family name for all little animals which have not red blood, bones, or cartilages ; furnished with a

trunk, or else a mouth opening lengthwise, with eyes which they cannot cover, and with lungs which have their openings on the sides ; for in these particulars all insects agree : but there are many others in which they differ, and therefore this large family has again been divided into smaller ones, called classes ; Linnæus makes seven, but Goldsmith reduces them to four ; and it is by his plan that these are arranged, which we will now examine together. Those that never have wings, but creep till they die, may be considered as forming the first class of insects, and in it you see the spider, the flea, the bug, the scorpion, and that most disgusting of all animals, the louse, which seems universally obnoxious to all ; nor is it surprising that this should be the case, as it is generally the companion of wretchedness, disease, and hunger.”

“ But here is a little creature,” said Fanny, pointing to the figure of a leech, “ that I believe is better liked.”

“ Oh, dear,” cried Emma ; “ I am sure it is as ugly a looking thing as any of them. I never saw one alive but once, but I was so much afraid of it that I ran away as fast as I could.”

“ You would not need to run very fast,” said Mrs. Ellison, “ to get out of the way of danger, were it

even in its power to do you any harm, for it would have little chance in contending with you."

"But they could do a great deal of harm by sucking one's blood,—could they not, ma'am?" asked Emma, rather ashamed of Mrs. Ellison's reproof.

"They could not do any injury," replied that lady, "unless a much greater number of them was collected on your body together than is often to be met with; and in general we are under obligations to them for their services, which are frequently very beneficial to us. The manner in which they are procured will prove that they have it in their power to do but little harm; for the people who make a trade of collecting them wade with their bare feet and legs into the shallow streams which they inhabit, and let the animals stick to them."

"They cannot be any thing very terrible then," said Emma; "and I am ashamed of having expressed so much fear of them."

"It would be well if every one were as easily made sensible of their folly," returned Mrs. Ellison; "we should not then see so many foolish and inveterate prejudices; such, for instance, as have been entertained against this little creature," added she, pointing to a drawing of the tarantula spider.

"What are these stories, ma'am?" asked Fanny,

who was always eager to draw Mrs. Ellison into conversation.

“The tarantula,” replied her friend, “is the largest kind of spider that is known in Europe ; and is apt in Italy, where it is a native, in very hot weather, to creep among the corn, and bite the reapers and passengers ; and it has been said, and believed by many, that its bite is attended with dangerous symptoms, such as violent sickness, difficulty of breathing, fainting, and sometimes madness or melancholy, which always return with the season when the person was bit, till they sometimes end in death. But the most wonderful part of the story is, that this terrible disease is supposed to be cured by the sound of a well-played fiddle ; but the whole is now fully ascertained to be a trick among the country people to get money from travellers. Wherever they meet with a person willing to try the experiment, they offer themselves, and are sure to act the part which is expected. But if we stay as long at every class as we have done at this, we shall consume our whole evening over these little creatures.”

“If they are all as entertaining as this has been,” said Emma, “I do not think we can do any thing better.”

“There is always something amusing or instruct-

ive to be met with in our inquiries about all animals, my dear; and I am very sure, the more attention you pay to them, the more you will find to admire, and the less idea you will have of being disgusted with any; which is certainly desirable, if it were only to save ourselves from those unpleasant sensations which are felt at meeting with what we have been in the habit of thinking either disgusting or dangerous; and which it is impossible to walk in the fields without frequently encountering.

“The second class are those which creep at first, but afterward gain the assistance of wings. It contains many beautiful and interesting animals, among which is the dragon-fly, which, I dare say, you have often admired when walking near a ditch, on a hot summer’s day, where they glitter in the sun in all their variety of colours. The history of the lion-ant is very curious, and the cheerful grasshopper and cricket, which are so generally considered as emblems of mirth and gayety, are also of this family.”

“Here is a little creature called an ephemeron, ma’am,” said Fanny; “I never heard of it before: pray, what kind of insect is it?”

“As it will not do for us to devote our whole evening to a lecture on natural history,” answered Mrs. Ellison, “I must refer you to Goldsmith’s Ani-

mated Nature for an account of it, with which I am sure you will be much pleased. Caterpillars, in general, may easily be distinguished from worms or maggots, by the number of their feet, and by their producing butterflies and moths ; and constitute the third class, in which the silkworm fills a conspicuous place.”

“ But there are many much handsomer than it,” said Emma ; “ look at this butterfly—I would far rather be a butterfly than a silkworm.”

“ If you merely desired a gay dress, you would certainly be right in your choice,” replied Mrs. Ellison ; “ but when you consider that the silkworm’s usefulness to man induces him to nourish and preserve it, while the butterfly flutters about unnoticed and disregarded, or is only admired for a moment, as it skims through the air, you will be convinced that useful qualities are much superior to a showy appearance ; and that outward ornaments do little towards gaining love and esteem, if, as in the case of the butterfly, they be unaccompanied with intrinsic worth.” Emma blushed, and, conscience-struck, almost imagined that Mrs. Ellison was aiming an intentional reproof at her ; and desirous, therefore, of changing the subject, she turned to the fourth class of insects. “ This class,” continued Mrs. Ellison, “ is numerous and various, for it compre-

hends all that are first laid as eggs, then are hatched as worms, and afterward acquire wings. In this class those industrious little animals, the bee and the ant are included. To these are added a fifth order, which comprehends a set of animals which resemble vegetables so nearly that they scarcely deserve the name of animate. You know how lifeless they are, for you have often seen the polypus and star-fish among the rocks. And now that I have gone through the general heads, I must leave you to examine them more fully at your leisure, and go and pay attention to some other of my young friends." She then quitted them, satisfied that she had given a more pleasant turn to their conversation for the rest of the evening.

In the morning, Emma, who was subject to a weakness in her eyes, awoke with them considerably inflamed, from cold which she had caught the night before ; but as she was afraid of exciting suspicion, she was unwilling to acknowledge any thing to be amiss with her, but continued bathing them with cold water for some time after she was dressed. Fanny therefore proceeded down stairs without her, and on passing the staircase window, she was attracted by the sight of a large glass jar which stood on a stool near it. Knowing it to be some chymical experiment which Mr. Hardy was trying, her curiosity was

excited, and she took it up to look at it, but unfortunately, in attempting to replace it, it slipped through her fingers and was broken in pieces. Alarmed at the accident, she stood for some time motionless, but finding that no one appeared to have heard the fall, she was for an instant tempted to deny knowing any thing of it, and to let it pass as having been caused by the cat's jumping on the stool, or some other such circumstance. But it was only for a moment that such a thought had place in her mind : in an instant she recollected, that though she had been guilty of a fault, in interfering with what she had not any business to touch, it was a trifling error in comparison of the falsehood she should be guilty of in denying it, and therefore hastened down stairs, determined to make a frank acknowledgment of what she had done. Her expressive countenance, which always spoke the feelings which were uppermost in her mind, soon discovered to her kind benefactor that all was not right with her, and he immediately inquired the cause of her uneasiness. With timid confidence she confessed to him what she had done, and expressed her concern with artlessness and sincerity. "I am sorry," said Mr. Hardy, when she ceased speaking, "that you have broken my jar, for it has disappointed me of an experiment in which I was much interested ; but I cannot pos-

sibly punish you, after the frank avowal you have made of your fault, and I hope for the future that you will have more prudence than to give so much indulgence to your curiosity." Fanny promised to have more command over herself in future, and was just about to take her seat at the breakfast-table, when Miss Hardy said, with an expression of pleasure which she in vain attempted to conceal, "I wish this openness was more the effect of honesty than art, Miss Fanny ; but pray tell me who it was that deceived me last night, and for the sake of appearing genteel, went without one of her petticoats?" Fanny looked surprised at this attack, but with great firmness answered, "It was not I, ma'am." "Was it not, Miss Honesty?" replied Miss Hardy, in a sneering tone, "then pray go and prove yourself innocent by bringing your petticoat to let me see that it has been worn." Fanny went with great alacrity to obey the order, but soon returned with a look of disappointment and distress ; "I find," said she, exceedingly disturbed at having to imply a charge against Emma, "that I did not wear my own petticoat last night, but put on Emma's instead."

"Was ever such shameful ingratitude known," exclaimed Miss Hardy, swelling with rage, "not only to cheat me, but to try to make me believe it was

my own dear innocent Emma that did it? What, brother, do you think of such behaviour? I hope you consider yourself now well repaid for your kindness to this little vagabond, by having your daughter's character destroyed; but I always foresaw how things would turn out."

"I am much at a loss what to think of this affair, Fanny," said Mr. Hardy; "for certainly appearances are very much against you."

"Indeed, sir, I am not guilty," replied Fanny; but the struggle in her mind between clearing herself and accusing her friend, which shocked her with the appearance of ingratitude, gave such a tinge to her cheeks, that it was mistaken for the colouring of conscious guilt, and her benefactor was already inclined to condemn her, when his daughter entered the room.

"Emma," said Miss Hardy, "go and bring me down the petticoats which you wore last night." Away ran Emma, and soon returned with two which had evidently been worn, and which were marked with her name in full. Fanny was desired to do the same; but, alas! could only produce one which had been worn, and which was marked with her name; the other was perfectly clean, and had never been unfolded. "Now, brother, are you not convinced?" asked Miss Hardy.

“I am,” replied her brother, with a look of great concern, “but am less displeased with the fault itself than with the wish to throw it upon Emma; I hope, however, and believe, that it is the first of the kind that Fanny ever committed, and I trust it will also be the last. And to give you time,” added he, turning to Fanny, “sufficiently to consider its nature, and repent of it, I desire that you will go into the back parlour, and stay there till you have leave to come out.”

“But first,” said Miss Hardy, who was much pleased to think she had at length brought conviction to her brother’s mind, “I must beg that she may dress herself in the clothes that she had on when she first came here: and then she may perhaps learn to be better satisfied in future with those which you are so good as to give her.” Poor Fanny, whose heart swelled almost to bursting, at the thought of appearing ungrateful to her kind benefactor, wept most violently, but her tears being mistaken for those of mortification and pride, Miss Hardy was only the more determined upon the punishment: and desiring her to come and let her see her when she was dressed, ordered her out of the room, just as she was endeavouring to compose herself to make another vindication of her innocence.

As the change of her dress, however, was to her

a small part of her punishment, she hastened immediately to alter it, and felt no other uneasiness from appearing in her original humble garb, than that which arose from the unfitness of its size to her present height and stoutness.

“Ay, now you are dressed as you ought to be,” said Miss Hardy, as Fanny entered the room, “and it is a pity but you could go back to your aunt Jane, to whom you do so much credit, for such a situation suits you best.”

“Oh! that I were indeed, with her,” said Fanny; whose tears flowed afresh at the mention of her aunt’s name; and she hastened to her prison with a mind agitated and distressed at the idea of being suspected of ingratitude and deceit, though supported and comforted by the consciousness of her own innocence.

Scarcely had Mr. Hardy left the breakfast-room, when, on her aunt’s remarking that her eyes looked inflamed, Emma confessed to her the part she herself had in the fault of which her friend was accused; for though she could not bear the idea of her father’s knowing of her guilt, she felt very little reluctance in making the confession to her aunt, who had, she knew, little right to blame her for a deceit of which she had so often set her an example. She had, therefore, just so much generosity towards Fanny, as

to prefer the slight reprimand which she expected from her aunt, to having her companion punished for a fault of which she was herself guilty. "So I hope, aunt," said Emma, when she had made her confession, "that you will not keep Fanny in prison any longer."

"She must stay now," said Miss Hardy, who was much mortified, and unwilling to make the necessary avowal that she had been mistaken in her boasted foresight and discernment, "for a few hours, or my letting her out will make your father inquire the cause. I will, however, let her out soon, and say it was from your intercession."

"Oh! no," cried Emma, whose heart revolted from any further deceit, "do not let me have credit for what I do not deserve, or I must confess to my papa all that I have done."

"You are too generous, my dear Emma," replied this weak, ill-judging woman, who, however, was strengthened in her wish to screen her niece's fault by her unwillingness to have so much credit reflected on the poor foundling whom she had so often injured; "for you know you have great credit in having told me the truth, when you were under no obligation to do so, and Fanny is certainly much obliged to you for it."

Emma was willing to think her aunt right; and therefore forbore to examine the subject more nar-

rowly, though a something in her mind whispered that she had not acted as Fanny would have done towards her.

The point was scarcely settled, when Miss Ellison called, with an invitation to the little girls to accompany her to a lecture on natural history ; “for,” said she, “the subject is one which I think will interest my little friends, from the conversation which we had last night on the natural history of insects, as that is the subject of this morning’s lecture.”

Miss Hardy excused her niece on account of the inflammation in her eyes, which Mrs. Ellison said she was not at all surprised to see ; “for,” added she, “I was rather prepared to find you the worse for your too genteel clothing last night ; but Fanny was more warmly covered, and is not, therefore, I hope, disabled from accompanying me.”

“Though Fanny has not been guilty of this folly,” replied Miss Hardy, who was unwilling that she should enjoy a pleasure of which her darling was deprived, “she has been guilty of others, for which my brother has sentenced her to solitary confinement.”

“But, aunt,” said Emma, “you know you promised that she should not stay long. I am sure my papa would not be displeased at your forgiving her ;

so, do pray let me go and tell her to dress herself to go with Mrs. Ellison."

"You are very good, Emma," replied that lady, "to intercede for your friend ; but I should think myself very injudicious in my kindness to her, if I prevented her from undergoing a just punishment, for such I am sure it is, when inflicted by your father ; but I will speak to him myself, and hear how far he thinks it right to extend his clemency towards her."

At the idea of Mrs. Ellison speaking to her brother of Fanny's fault, Miss Hardy was immediately alarmed with the dread that an explanation of the whole might follow ; and therefore, thinking it best to hush the matter up as soon as possible, she replied, "My brother will not be at home again till late in the day, but as it is not a fault of very serious moment, I am sure he would rather that Emma was gratified by her friend's release than not. You may go, therefore, my dear," added she to her niece, "and tell Fanny to get ready."

Emma found Fanny sitting with a countenance of much greater gravity than was usual with her, though entirely free from any expression either of peevishness or ill-nature. "I may dress and go with Mrs. Ellison to the lecture !" exclaimed she, as Emma delivered her commission ; "but have I

your papa's leave? for unless I have I should rather not go."

"My papa," answered Emma, "is gone from home for the greater part of the day; but he left it with my aunt to do as she thought proper with you, and she has consented to your going."

"Then you have done me justice, I know," cried Fanny, clasping her arms round Emma's neck, and kissing her affectionately, "and my dear Emma is still my friend."

Emma could not receive these acknowledgments without confusion, for she was conscious in how very inefficient a manner she had shown her friendship.

Fanny was soon dressed, and hastened with great alacrity and glee to attend her friend; but felt a little damped on entering the room, to hear Mrs. Ellison express her concern at her having been under punishment, and hope she was sensible of her obligation to Emma, for getting her released. But, thought Fanny, Emma has not liked to expose herself to Mrs. Ellison, and it is not to be wondered at; for I know by what I now feel myself, that it is a very painful thing to meet with her displeasure. I am sure, however, she will clear me to her papa, and if I am restored to his good opinion, I can bear any thing else.

It being now time for them to go, Mrs. Ellison

and her little companion set off, and as soon as they were gone, Emma, who could no longer bear up under the inflammation of her eyes, was obliged to go to bed ; where,—for a time, she felt fully convinced of the folly and weakness of exposing herself to such painful attacks, for the foolish gratification of being thought in the fashion. “ Besides,” thought she, “ it has led me to be unjust and unkind to one who is always affectionate and good to me, and I have now no other resource than to continue to be so, or else to expose myself to my papa’s displeasure, and lose his good opinion and confidence.” How foolishly did Emma thus argue ! and how little was she aware, that she would be much more likely to gain the esteem of her father and friends, by a frank and generous avowal, than to leave it to the possibility of chance to make the discovery. But, though she knew that she was wrong, she had not magnanimity enough to make the confession. .

As soon as Fanny returned home, she hastened to Emma’s room to give her an account of the amusement which she had had, but was prevented by Miss Hardy’s telling her that she believed Emma was asleep, and that she did not wish to have her disturbed : she sat down, therefore, to select from the books which had been recommended by the lecturer such interesting anecdotes as she thought

would amuse the invalid. This kept her busily employed till dinner-time ; and when the bell rang to summon her to the dining-parlour, she ran with glee in the hope of meeting her dear benefactor, and of receiving a smile from him, which would show that she was restored to his good opinion. But, alas ! such a smile was not in store for her ; her benefactor was there, but did not meet his little favourite with his usual expression of kindness ; he did not even notice her as she entered the room, nor ever spoke to her, excepting to invite her to something on the table, which he did with a look and tone of such distant reserve, that poor Fanny's appetite was soon satisfied, and her food seemed as though it would choke her as she swallowed it ; nor durst she raise her eyes, from the fear of meeting a forbidding frown from one who had ever before met her with a look of affectionate tenderness. She was at length relieved from this painful situation, by Miss Hardy telling her that she believed Emma was now awake. She did not, however, hasten up stairs with the pleasure she had done before, for she could not help feeling that she had been much injured. "Emma has been unjust and unkind to me," thought she, as she hastened up stairs, "but I will not retort upon her, I will not seek to restore myself to the good opinion of my benefactor, by lessen-

ing his daughter in his good opinion. I wish to recover his esteem, but I will only try to do so by deserving it. Emma is ill ; and it is my duty to be kind to her, and to endeavour to amuse her."

"Who is that?" asked Emma, as Fanny at that instant opened the room-door. "It is I," answered Fanny ; "I am come to read to you, if you think it will amuse you. I have some very interesting accounts of different insects, which I think you will be pleased with."

"You are very kind to me," said Emma ; "I do not deserve that you should be so kind to me, for I have not behaved well to you." Fanny felt tempted to say, "Then do me justice, and restore me to your father's favour, for you know it is not in my power to prove my innocence ;" but she checked the impulse, lest it should seem like a reproach, which she was too delicate to utter, at a time, when Emma was expressing a sense of her injustice, and she was persuaded that the first step towards repairing an injury was a consciousness of having committed it : she had not, therefore, the least doubt Emma would make the necessary amends as soon as she had an opportunity. "Here is the account of the ephemeron, which Mrs. Ellison recommended us to read," said she, opening the volume of "Goldsmith's Animated Nature," which she held in her

hand. "Should you like to hear it?" On Emma assenting, Fanny began the following account of that curious insect:—

"The last insect we shall add to this second order is the ephemeron, which, though not strictly belonging to it, yet seems more properly referred to this rank than any other. Indeed, we must not attend to the rigour of method, in a history where nature seems to take delight to sport in variety.

"That there should be a tribe of flies whose duration extends but to a day, seems at first surprising, but the wonder will increase when we are told that some of this kind seem to be born and to die in the space of a single hour. The reptile, however, from which they are bred, is by no means so short-lived; but is sometimes seen to live two years, and many times three years together.

"All ephemera, of which there are many kinds, are produced from the egg, in the form of worms, from whence they change into a more perfect form; namely, that of aurelias, which is a kind of middle state between a worm and a fly: and from thence they take their last mutation, which is into a beautiful fly of longer or shorter duration according to its kind.

"The ephemeron in its fly state is a very beautiful winged insect, and has a strong resemblance

to the butterfly, both from its shape and its wings. It is about the size of a middling butterfly, but its wings differ in not being covered with the painted dust with which those of butterflies are adorned and rendered opaque, for they are very transparent and very thin. This insect has four wings, the uppermost of which are much the longest; when it is at rest, it generally lays its wings one over the other, on the back. The body is long, being formed of six rings that are larger at the origin than near the extremity, and from this a tail proceeds, that is longer than all the rest of the fly, and consists sometimes of three threads of an equal length, or sometimes of two long and one short. To acquire this beautiful form, the insect has undergone several transmutations: but its glory is very short-lived, for the hour of its perfection is the hour of its death; and it seems scarcely introduced to pleasure, when it is obliged to part with life.

“The reptile that is to become a fly, and that is granted so long a term, when compared to its latter duration, is an inhabitant of the water, and bears a very strong resemblance to fishes in many particulars; having gills by which it breathes at the bottom, and also the tapering form of aquatic animals. These insects have six scaly legs fixed on their corslet. Their head is triangular: the eyes are

placed forward, and may be distinguished by their largeness and colour. The mouth is furnished with teeth, and the body consists of six rings ; that next the corslet being largest, but growing less and less to the end : the last ring is shortest, from which the three threads proceed, which are as long as the whole body. Thus we see that the reptile bears a very strong resemblance to the fly, and only requires wings to be very near its perfection.

“As there are several kinds of this animal, their aurelias are consequently of different colours ; some yellow, some brown, and some cream-coloured. Some of these also bore themselves cells at the bottom of the water, from which they never stir out, but feed upon the mud composing the walls of their habitation, in contented captivity ; others, on the contrary, range about, rise from the bottom to the surface, swim between two waters, quit that element entirely to feed upon plants by the river-side, and then return to their favourite element for safety and protection.

“The reptile, however, though it lives two or three years, offers but little in its long duration to excite curiosity. It is hid at the bottom of the water, and feeds almost wholly within its narrow habitation. The most striking facts command our attention during the short interval of its fly state, into

which it crowds the most various transactions of its little life. It then may be said to be in a hurry to live, as it has but so small a time to exist. The peculiar sign by which to know that these reptiles will change into flies in a short time consists in a protuberance of the wings on the back. About that time the smooth and depressed form of the upper part of the body is changed into a more swollen and rounder shape ; so that the wings are in some degree visible through the external sheath that covers them. As they are not natives of England, he who would see them in their greatest abundance must walk about sunset along the banks of the Rhine, or the Seine near Paris ; where, for about three days in the midst of the summer, he will be astonished at their numbers and assiduity. The thickest descent of the flakes of snow in winter seems not to equal their number ; the whole air seems alive with the new-born race, and the earth itself is covered with their remains. The aurelias, or reptile insects, that are as yet beneath the surface of the water, wait only for the approach of evening to begin their transformation. The most industrious shake off their old garments about eight o'clock, and those who are most tardy are transformed before nine.

“We have already seen that the operation of change in other insects is laborious and painful ;

but with these nothing seems shorter or performed with greater ease. The aurelias are scarcely lifted above the surface of the water when their old sheathing skin bursts ; and through the orifice which is thus formed a fly issues, whose wings at the same instant are unfolded, and it rises into the air. Millions and millions of aurelias are produced in this manner, and at once become flies, and fill every quarter with their flutterings. But all these sports are shortly to have an end ; for as the little strangers live but an hour or two, the whole swarm soon falls to the ground, covering the earth like a deep snow, for several hundred yards on each side of the river. Their numbers are incredible, and every object they touch becomes fatal to them ; for they instantly die, if they even fly against each other. Of all insects this appears to be the most prolific, and it would seem that there was a necessity for such a supply, as in its reptile state it is the favourite food of every kind of fresh-water fish. It is in vain that these little animals form galleries at the bottom of the river, from whence they seldom remove ; many kinds of fish break in upon their retreats and thin their numbers. For this reason, fishermen are careful to provide themselves with these insects, as the most grateful bait, and thus turn the fish's rapacity to its own destruction.

“But though the usual date of those flies is two or three hours, at farthest, there are some kinds that live several days ; and one kind, in particular, after quitting the water has another case or skin to get rid of. These are often seen in the fields and woods distant from the water, but more frequently in its vicinity. They are often found sticking upon walls and trees, and frequently with the head downward, without changing place, or having any sensible motion. They are then waiting for the moment when they shall be divested of their last incommodious garment, which sometimes does not happen for two or three days together.”

Thus did Fanny kindly strive to relieve Emma from the uneasiness of her situation ; or when her friend's eyes were too weak to bear the admission of so much light into the room as she could see to read by, she exerted herself to amuse her in every way she could think of. She would repeat stories which she had read, or poems which she had learned ; would sing songs, or set her to guess enigmas, till Emma herself almost wondered how the time had gone so quickly. In vain, however, was Emma warned by her conscience that she owed a debt of justice to her friend, for as often as she suggested the idea to her aunt, she was silenced by that weak woman's mistaken reasoning. “It would be no

kindness to Fanny in the end," she would say, "to explain matters to your father ; for he is so foolishly indulgent to her already, that he is doing her a great injury ; and if this business were explained to him, he would know no bounds to his kindness to make it up ; and you know it is doing her no good to accustom her to so much indulgence, for it is what she cannot always have. If any thing were to happen to your father, what would become of her ? And, indeed, at all events, she must expect to have to struggle for herself through the world ; for though your father may give her a good education, he cannot be expected to give her a fortune.

" Besides, it is of less consequence now that he should know that she was not to blame ; for he is beginning to forget the affair altogether, and to speak to her, and look at her much more kindly than he did. This morning, when she came into the room, he asked her what she had got in her hand, and on her telling him they were two sweet violets which she had found under the hawthorn-bush all covered over with leaves, and that she had only known that they were there by their sweet smell ; he said, ' That is like modest virtue, Fanny : it seeks to hide itself, but it is too engaging not to be discovered by some one who admires excellence and loves to reward it. These violets too will

silent after they are withered, and so will the sweets of a virtuous life survive the grave. I hope, therefore, you will make it your study in future to be good."

"If he has remembered Fanny's fault so long," said Emma, "what would he think of mine, if he knew how I have behaved?"

"That is the very reason that I wish you would not say any thing about it," said her aunt. "If such a thing should happen again, I would have you acknowledge the whole at once; but, after keeping it so long, and receiving so much kindness from her while you have been ill, I am sure your father would never think well of you again if you were to tell him now." Alarmed at the idea of forfeiting her father's good opinion for ever, Emma's conscience was silenced; she declared, however, that she never would again subject herself to the uneasiness which she then felt; but, alas! Emma knew not herself, or how inadequate she was to withstand temptation, while nursing in her heart a dangerous passion which seemed to threaten the destruction of every virtue.

"What a pity it is, Miss Emma," said Nanny, who had entered the little girl's room one day, just as Emma, who was arranging her drawers, had taken out her new frock once more to look at and admire it,—“what a pity it is that your frock should

not be trimmed with lace, as Miss Lomax's is! Don't you think it was a great improvement to it?"

"Yes, to be sure it was," answered Emma; "but you know I have not any lace that is handsome enough, and I would rather not have any than what was not as good."

"Oh certainly, and so would I, Miss Emma; but then you know you do not need to be without it on that account, for you are as able to buy handsome lace as Miss Lomax is; and I am sure, if I were you, I would have some too."

"But how can I?" asked Emma, peevishly; "for I have no money myself, and my aunt says she cannot afford to buy me any; for my frock cost so much, that she has no more money to spare till she gets her next quarter's allowance, which will not be for a long time."

"That is a great pity, I am sure," replied Nanny, "for I know you are to be invited out soon to a very large party, and your frock looks so unfinished, that I declare if you would condescend, Miss Emma, to borrow of a servant, I should be very glad to lend you the money myself."

"But I should have no chance of paying you again," said Emma; "for it would come to more than I ever had at once in my life, or am ever likely to have, for many years to come."

“No matter for that, Miss Emma, when I wish to oblige I do not like to do it by halves ; so that if you will have the money, you may pay me as you can ; or, you know you have a great many more clothes than you have any occasion for, or will ever wear, you may give me any old-fashioned thing that you have done with ; and I could make it up for myself, or sell what I could not make use of, and I dare say I should soon get my money back, without your being any thing the poorer.”

“Well, I will ask my aunt.”

“Oh no !” interrupted Nanny, “you must not say any thing to her about it ; for I know her so well, she would not, on any account, be obliged to a servant for any thing, if she wanted it ever so much.”

“But the lace would then do me no good ; for, without her knowledge, I should never be able to wear it.”

“Oh, trust that to my management ; for you know that you are never to wear your frock when your papa would see it ; I can take care to tack the lace on after your aunt has looked at it to see if it be clean enough, and will take it off again at night, before she sees it.”

“You are very good,” said Emma ; “and I should like very much to have it, not that I care so

much for the lace, as for the pleasure of disappointing Miss Lomax ; for she looked so proud when she saw how much handsomer her frock was than mine, just as though she thought it was not in my power to get any lace. But do you think you have as much money as her lace cost ?”

“ Yes, I know exactly what it cost, or her maid told me ; it was just two guineas, and I have that much, and will get it for you to-day.”

Emma was much pleased with the idea of her frock receiving this finish ; and on going down stairs was told by her aunt that there was an invitation come for them to go in the course of a few nights to another large party, and that her father had consented to their going. “ But,” added Miss Hardy, “ I shall take care to see you dressed myself, that I may be sure you are sufficiently warm, and not in any danger of catching cold.”

“ Am I not to have my new frock on, aunt ?” asked Emma, in some anxiety.

1 “ Certainly, but as that, you know, is only an outward ornament, you must be sufficiently clothed without it ; and Nanny shall go as she did before, and put on your frock after you get there.”

Perfectly satisfied with this arrangement, Emma once more began to think there was greater pleasure to be derived from dress than she had been led to

believe when suffering under the pain of her sore eyes. "How stupid Fanny is!" said she to her aunt, as she began with great volubility on her favourite topic, "how stupid it is of her to be so indifferent about her dress! I do not believe she cares whether she has a thick or a thin muslin frock on, if it be but clean and whole; and as to lace, or any other kind of ornament, I do not think she ever sees whether people have any on or not. Everybody's ornaments might be like hers, *hidden ones*, for she never sees them. I wonder what it was that my papa meant when she first came here, and he talked of her ornaments; for I never, as yet, found out any that she had; did you, aunt?" Emma was here interrupted by the appearance of her father, accompanied by Fanny, who was now restored to favour; and though her behaviour had never been explained, the usual smiles of her kind friend had restored her vivacity, and made her forget all the pain she had endured. "Come, Emma," cried she, "your papa has two very pretty things to show us, and has promised to give one to each of us, if we can guess what it is."

"Oh, what is it, papa?" asked Emma, running to him, "where have you it? for I do not see any thing in your hand."

"It is in my pocket-book," replied her father, "but if I tell you beforehand what it is, you will then have

no merit in guessing. But," added he, feeling in his pocket, "I find I have not my book in my pocket, as I believed I had."

"Oh," said Fanny, "I dare say I can guess where it is ; so if you will let that guess serve instead of the other, I will tell you where I think you may find it."

"I will make no such bargain," answered Mr. Hardy, smiling and patting her under the chin, for he liked to encourage her playful vivacity, and to see her so much at her ease with him as to indulge it before him ; "so I call upon you, Miss Fanny, to render up my pocket-book, as you have confessed that you know where it is."

"I saw it lying on the study-table before breakfast, when you sent me in for a book, and I dare say it is there still, for you know you charged Nanny not to disturb any of the books which were lying there. But perhaps," added she, looking slyly as she went out of the room to bring it, "I may stay to take the first peep before I bring it." She returned in a moment with the pocket-book, which she found as she expected, out of which Mr. Hardy took two very pretty fishes, painted apparently on very fine paper ; and desiring the little girls to hold out their hands, he laid upon each of them a fish, which instantly curled up as if conscious of feeling pain from the touch. Emma started and let hers

fall, but immediately recollecting herself, and taking it up again, "It is surely something belonging to a sensitive-plant," said she; "for that is just the way the leaves curl up when they are touched."

"You have made so good a guess," said Mr. Hardy, "that I think I must allow you to have won yours; for it is generally supposed, I believe, that they are cut out of the leaf of a sensitive-plant, though that is not really the case. So now, Fanny, there is room for you to try to win yours."

"But I shall not win mine by guessing," replied Fanny ingenuously; "I know already what they are made of, for I read an account of them the other day. They are nothing more than a very thin shaving of horn or whalebone, which are substances so susceptible of the influence of moisture, that they make the best hygrometers, or instruments for measuring the degrees of moisture; and it is the perspiration from the palm of the hand, expanding the side that is laid upon it, that is the cause of its curling up, as though it were alive."

"You have remembered so well, and given so good an account of what you read," returned Mr. Hardy, "that you have a clear right to a reward for it, as well as for the honesty with which you forbore to take any undue merit to yourself. Take your fish, therefore, and believe me, that this is a very

small part of the reward which such qualifications will always afford you."

The next morning when Fanny met her benefactor in the breakfast parlour, she was struck with a look of unusual seriousness in his countenance, and as she sat down to the table, "Fanny," said he, "where did you find my pocket-book yesterday, when you went for it?"

"On your study-table, sir," answered the little girl.

"Was it in the same place where you had seen it in the morning?"

"Yes, sir."

"Was there any person but yourself in the room, when you saw it?"

"No, sir."

"Do you know of any one's having been in the room after you?"

"No, sir, not of any one."

"Nor of any one who had been there before?"

"Yes, sir; you had been there, and desired me to go and bring the book which you had been reading in, and which you had left open on the table, when you were called away to speak to a man in the kitchen."

"And do you not know of any one else having been there but you and I?"

"No, sir; I do not think there was any one, for I met Nanny in the lobby as I was coming with the book to you, and she said she did not intend to go into the study even to light the fire unless she was ordered, for you had given her such charges about not disturbing any of the things you had left."

"Why are you so particular in asking Fanny so many questions, brother?" asked Miss Hardy.

"Because," replied her brother, "I find there have been two bank-notes, each of two pounds, taken out of my pocket-book while it was out of my possession yesterday, and I cannot discover who has taken them; for I have examined all the servants, and can find no cause of suspicion among them."

"Oh, I have no doubt it will easily be found out!" exclaimed Miss Hardy, again elated with the hope that she should at length find Fanny guilty of a serious offence. "It was not likely Fanny should know so well where the pocket-book was, without knowing as well what it contained."

"A short time ago such an insinuation would have shocked me beyond measure," said Mr. Hardy; "but I must own, I have now lost a great deal of the confidence which I once had in Fanny's honesty and integrity."

Fanny was thunderstruck! she could scarcely suppose it possible that she could be suspected of

such a crime, and she gave Emma a heart-piercing look of reproach, for having subjected her to such a suspicion, by being the means of her integrity ever having been called in question. "It is not so much from a suspicion of your guilt," said Mr. Hardy; "as I wish to have your innocence fully-proved, I must insist, Fanny, that you empty your pocket, and that my sister search your drawers; for I shall take every means of discovering the guilty person, and as I happen to know the number of the notes, I shall soon be able to satisfy myself."

Fanny immediately prepared to obey, though so much shocked at the idea of so disgraceful a suspicion as to be unable to speak; and was still more grieved, as Nanny, who happened to come into the room with some fresh toast, had time to hear what was going forward before Mr. Hardy was aware she was present. The pocket was soon emptied, and found to contain nothing but a thimble, a pencil, and a small piece of paper, which, on unfolding, Mr. Hardy found had some lines written on it with a pencil; and his eye at the same time glancing over the words, "On two early violets," he said, "This paper is of a very different nature from that which I am in search of; but as I see the subject, I should be glad, Fanny, if you will give me leave

to read it." Fanny gave the desired permission, and he read the following lines :—

ON TWO EARLY SWEET VIOLETS.

Returning slowly past a violet bed,
The passing gale a fragrant odour spread ;
I search'd the spot, and quickly there I found,
Hid 'neath their leaves, and bending to the ground,
Two modest buds ; which, without vain display,
Had op'd their leaves to meet the coming day ;
And from the cover of their leafy cell
Were but discover'd by their fragrant smell.
And such, methought, while bending to the stem,
Is modest virtue's pure and simple gem :
No ostentatious wish to seek for praise,
But still retiring from the public gaze,
It spreads its sweet beneficence around,
And by the fame it shuns can but be found.
Further the simile my mind pursu'd,
As these sweet flow'rs, all withered soon, I view'd ;
For still, though dead, their fragrant scent remain'd,
And their soft leaves the pow'r to charm retain'd ;
Nor yet has tyrant death itself the pow'r
Virtue to conquer with life's transient hour ;
It still will live in ev'ry kindred breast,
And make the world with its sweet influence blest ;
Till that great hour when heav'n's eternal King
Calls it to blossom in an endless spring.

Exceedingly struck at seeing how Fanny had improved the hints which he had given her a few mornings before, Mr. Hardy stood for some time wrapped in thought. This child, thought he, must

either be a pattern of virtue, or a masterpiece of art and duplicity, and the latter I can scarcely suppose possible. He was roused from his reverie, however, by the return of his sister, who had left the room without his perceiving it : and eager to satisfy herself, as she said, lest she should entertain unjust suspicions, though, in fact, from a hope of having those suspicions confirmed, she had hastened to search Fanny's drawers, and soon returned from the examination. "Look !" cried she, as she entered the room, "see what is here !" and opening a small ivory box, showed a bank-note enclosed. Mr. Hardy unfolded it, and found it was one of his own. He stood for some time motionless with surprise, and then turning to Fanny said, "Here is one of the unfortunate notes ; it only remains for you frankly to acknowledge what you have done with the other." Fanny, whose courage rose in proportion as she was oppressed, answered, with a calm, steady voice, "I cannot tell any thing of it, sir ; nor did I know that note was in the box, for I put it into my drawer this morning quite empty."

"There !" cried Miss Hardy, bursting into a violent rage ; "she means, I suppose, to insinuate that I put it there ; but such barefaced effrontery can never be put up with. I hope, brother, you do not

mean to persevere in exposing your family to such insults !”

“No,” replied Mr. Hardy; “if I find that it really is as I indeed now begin to fear, she shall not continue an inmate in my house, but shall be sent to school, where she shall be kept under more strict discipline.” The idea of being banished as a culprit from the house of her beloved benefactor overcame all Fanny’s assumed courage, and bursting into tears, she entreated Mr. Hardy not to condemn her till he had taken sufficient time to examine into the truth; and protested her innocence in such a tone of sincerity that he again began to waver, and promised to take every pains to ascertain the fact before he condemned her. Emma, in the mean time, was exceedingly perplexed, and at a loss how to act on the occasion. She was convinced in her own mind that Fanny was innocent, and that the money which Nanny had been so liberal in offering her was actually part of that which she had stolen from her father; but the manner in which she had involved herself in the guilt made it impossible, she thought, for her to explain her suspicions; all, therefore, that she could do, was to protest her belief in Fanny’s innocence, but without venturing to give one proof to confirm it. “I am as unwilling as you can possibly be, my dear Emma, to believe Fanny

capable of such conduct, but appearances are certainly against her at present. I will not, however, I repeat, condemn her without a further examination of the matter, and desire that the affair may not be mentioned to any one at present; for though the recovery of one of the notes has been accompanied with very unfavourable appearances, I sincerely hope that the other may elucidate the matter more to her advantage; and the pleasure which such a circumstance would give me can be imagined by few; for few can tell the delight with which I have anticipated the day when I should have the happiness to restore my little *protégée* to her first friend and protectress, either in this world, or that in which her virtues should have received a higher polish, and she would exhibit a finished pattern of that character which was so early and so nobly begun, under her excellent aunt's instructions."

This reference to her still tenderly beloved aunt Jane, whose name never failed at any time to excite emotions in Fanny's grateful and affectionate mind, at this time particularly affected her; and after Mr. Hardy had left the room, and his sister had called Emma to follow her, that she might talk over to her all the probabilities of Fanny's guilt, of which she was herself fully convinced, from the persuasion that mean birth is ever accompanied with vicious

principles,—Fanny remained alone, giving free vent to a copious flow of tears ; in which situation she was found by Mrs. Ellison, who was shown into the room by a servant, who went to tell Miss Hardy of her call. Much surprised at the sight of her little lively favourite in tears, Mrs. Ellison inquired eagerly into the cause, which Fanny, however, felt very unwilling to disclose ; for the bare suspicion of such a crime tinged her cheek with shame. At length, however, overcome by her friend's kind solicitations, and encouraged by the hope that she might gain from her some advice how to act in the affair, Fanny related all that had passed about the unfortunate pocket-book, simply and circumstantially, without either mingling accusations against others, or protestations in her own favour.

“ I will not insult you, my dear Fanny, so much as to ask if you are innocent,” said Mrs. Ellison, when Fanny had ceased speaking ; “ but I must know every thing that you can tell me that may tend to prove you to be so, in the eyes of those who at present suspect you. Is there any one whom you have yourself any reason to suspect, or do you know of any enemies you have in the house ? ”

“ No, ma'am,” replied Fanny in a faint voice, for she could not forget the part that Emma had acted in a late affair, nor the many and repeated acts of

unkindness which she had received from Miss Hardy; yet she could not allow herself even to harbour a suspicion that either of them had any share in the business.

“The last time I was here,” said Mrs. Ellison, “you were under punishment for a fault of some kind; but the nature of it I could not learn from Miss Hardy, and did not at that time choose to inquire of yourself, from a fear of giving you unnecessary pain. Some circumstances, however, led me to suspect that you were not so much to blame as you were at first supposed to be; I should therefore be glad if you would make me acquainted with the particulars of the business, as one circumstance often leads to the elucidation of another, and it is necessary, in this instance, that delicacy should give way to justice; for you know, my dear, a good character is of the utmost importance to you, who have no other dependence.”

Grateful for her kindness, and convinced by her reasoning, Fanny, though reluctantly, obeyed her friend, and told her all with which she was herself acquainted, that had brought her into disgrace with her benefactor. She had just finished the relation when Miss Hardy entered the room. “You may leave the room, Fanny,” said she, as she entered. Fanny obeyed. “This is a sad business, Mrs.

Ellison," said she, the moment Fanny had closed the door ; " who could have thought that little creature was so far advanced in deceit and depravity ! I am sure I had no idea of it, though I must confess, that I always had a very different opinion of her from that which my brother entertained ; for, poor man, he is always so foolishly partial where he takes a liking ; but I have seen a great deal of the world, and made a great deal of observation, and have constantly found that low birth and low habits are invariably combined."

" This is a very sweeping assertion," said Mrs. Ellison calmly, " considering how many distinguished characters we have known who have risen from the humblest stations of life."

" Very true," returned Miss Hardy ; " there are no general rules without exceptions, as you know ; but because such a thing has happened once or twice in a century, it does not follow that a beggar's brat that is picked up off the streets is to become a prodigy, because my brother happened to take a fancy to her."

" Certainly not," replied Mrs. Ellison ; " there must be something more than Mr. Hardy's merely taking a fancy to her that must make her so ; but the extraordinary qualities which first attracted his attention may, perhaps, have that effect ; and we certainly

must acknowledge that Fanny has very uncommon abilities."

"Oh, she is clever enough, to be sure," said Miss Hardy; "but what is she the better for that? For in my opinion, good abilities without good principles, serve only to make a more depraved character."

"There can be no doubt of it: but as Fanny is still very young, I hope that even vicious propensities, if she is so unfortunate as to possess them, may still be counteracted."

"I doubt it much," returned Miss Hardy. "I am glad, however, to find that my brother is determined, when he is fully convinced of her guilt, which there is no doubt he soon will be, to send her away; and then I do not know where she will find any one to patronise her as he has done."

"I am very sure that Mr. Hardy will never desert her, as long as she leaves him the least hope of reformation," said Mrs. Ellison, calmly; "but if such a circumstance should happen, my house shall be open to receive her, and I will be her guardian and protectress. But," added she, rising, "I have business of importance to look after this morning, and must therefore make my call a short one." Then wishing Miss Hardy a good morning, she went away, leaving that lady greatly at a loss to account for the extraordinary interest which the unpro-

tected and portionless Fanny had gained in her mind; which surprised her still more than her brother's prepossession, for she had always considered him to be subject to odd fancies; but Mrs. Ellison was regarded as a woman in whom a fashionable education was united to that discernment of character which it contributes to confer.

The day arrived on which the little girls were to pay their visit, without any thing further having occurred to explain the affair of the stolen notes, or to clear poor Fanny from the serious imputations which were against her. And as Mr. Hardy found himself more and more unable to explain the business to his satisfaction, his manner to Fanny became tinged with greater reserve and coldness. This distressed her exceedingly; and her hopes from Mrs. Ellison's kind interference gradually growing fainter as the time passed over without her hearing any thing from her, she felt herself so little disposed for gayety and visiting, that she would gladly have been excused accompanying Emma, had not Mr. Hardy said that it was his wish she should go, that there should not appear to be any thing amiss till his mind was more fully made up on the subject. Perfect obedience was always Fanny's practice, and she therefore hastened to prepare herself for the visit, not allowing her mind ever once to be engaged

with the idea of how she should look, or whether her dress was likely to be equalled or excelled by that of any one whom she might meet. Had she, however, studied with the greatest anxiety, she could not, perhaps, have been more successful; for the neat simplicity of her dress was perfectly in unison with the artlessness and innocence of her whole appearance; and even Emma, though she saw her unadorned with a single piece of finery, could not but acknowledge to herself that she looked very pretty and genteel. Miss Hardy, as she had said, inspected the dressing, and being satisfied that her niece was perfectly secure from cold, felt no fear of her wearing a thin frock, which she desired Nanny to pin up in a handkerchief to take with her. This frock, however, was doomed to be nothing but a subject of uneasiness to its wearer; for though she now saw herself equipped in it with the addition of the elegant trimming of lace, which she found on comparison was much handsomer than that on Miss Lomax's frock, she still was far from being happy in it. The persuasion which she could not but feel, that with that lace were connected poor Fanny's sufferings, imbibited every thought; and when Fanny said, with her usual good-humour, "How beautiful that frock is! and how well you look in it!" these expressions of admiration from her unsuspecting

friend only gave a sting to her mind, and made her wish she had never seen either the frock or trimming. But what were her alarm and uneasiness on hearing her father's voice in the next room, and expecting every moment to see him enter that in which she was ! Not even when she heard him bid the master of the house, on whom he had called upon business, "good night," and the street-door close after him, could she persuade herself she was safe. And when, at length, she saw the door open and some one about to be ushered in, the colour entirely forsook her cheeks, and she trembled with fear even after she saw it was no one from whom she had any thing to apprehend. "My dear Emma, you are ill," said Fanny, coming up to her with concern ; "what is the matter with you ?"

"The matter with me !" said Emma, starting, and the colour rushing as hastily into her cheeks as it had before left them, "nothing is the matter with me. Why should there be any thing the matter with me, any more than with you ?"

"Only," said Fanny, "because you were pale, and seemed agitated."

"I agitated !" replied Emma, peevishly ; "I wish, Fanny, you would not take such fancies into your head about me. I am no more agitated than you are, so you need not try to persuade me to it."

"No," said Fanny, with a gentle smile, "I am sure I do not wish to persuade you to be uncomfortable. I was only afraid you were so ; but am very glad to find I was mistaken." The visit at length over, Emma put off the important frock with a more perfect disgust to finery than she had ever felt in her life before ; and returned home much more dispirited and uncomfortable than even the disgraced and suspected Fanny.

The painful anxiety of poor Fanny's situation began, at length, to affect her looks so materially, that Mr. Hardy, who was kind even in his displeasure, was persuaded it would be less cruel towards her to let her know his determination at once, than to keep her any longer in suspense. He had been unable to trace any circumstances which were at all calculated to clear her from the suspected guilt ; and though still willing to hope she was either innocent, or that she had been led to the commission of the act by some circumstances which, if known, might tend to lessen its enormity, yet under such suspicions he did not think himself justified to keep her in the house as a companion for his daughter. He determined, however, while he sent her away, to do it in such a manner as not to expose her to others ; for he kindly considered her youth, and hoped that this early lesson would prove the means of curing her

of every bad propensity, and of making her after all the amiable character he had so long looked forward to her becoming. The school to which he intended to send her was one where he was sure she would have proper care and attention; at the same time that she would be under such strict discipline as should put it out of her power to do wrong, and in time lead her to forget the inclination.

With these motives, therefore, he one morning, as soon as breakfast was over, turned to Fanny, and said, "I have taken every means I can think of for satisfying myself about those unfortunate notes, and am sorry to say that my suspicions still rest upon you. I have therefore come to a determination, as I cannot, under such circumstances, keep you as a companion for my daughter, to remove you to a school at some distance; where, I hope, by the strictness with which you will be attended, you will have time to forget every vicious propensity. As I do not wish to injure your character thus early in life, I shall form an excuse on account of your health, which is at present far from so good as usual, for sending you away; but shall myself be much more inclined to hope for your improvement, if you will before you go make a frank acknowledgment of what you have done with the other note."

"Indeed, sir," said Fanny, in as steady a voice

as her agitation would permit, "I know nothing of the money, nor ever saw it till Miss Hardy brought it down stairs."

"A very likely story!" said Miss Hardy; "as if it could get into your box and be closely screwed up there, without your knowing of it; when you acknowledge yourself that you put the box into your drawer that very morning."

"But it had nothing in it then, ma'am," said Fanny, in a firm but respectful tone.

"Intolerable impertinence!" exclaimed Miss Hardy.

"These insinuations, Fanny," said Mr. Hardy, mildly, but with a look and tone of displeasure, "are what make me more inclined to think ill of you than any thing else; for it seems like a wish to throw the suspicion on an innocent person. You know it is but a very short time since you endeavoured to throw a fault on my own Emma, and might, perhaps, have succeeded, had not circumstances been so plainly against you. Leave the room, therefore, before you are tempted to do the same again, and prepare as quickly as you can for your removal."

"Oh! sir," cried Fanny, clasping her hands and bursting into an agony of distress, "do not send me from you in anger! It will break my heart to be sent away without the power of proving my inno-

cence—to think that you still suspect me of being so base and ungrateful to one to whom I owe every thing.”

“Most sincerely do I wish, Fanny,” replied Mr. Hardy, much moved with her unaffected distress, “most sincerely do I wish you could prove my suspicions groundless ; but I have given you time, for I have made no hasty determinations : nothing remains, therefore, for you but to submit, for I cannot now change them without something more than mere assertion of your innocence.”

“Alas !” exclaimed the almost heart-broken Fanny, looking round with despair in her countenance, “is there no one who will stand my friend ? Will no one restore me to the good opinion of my beloved benefactor ?”

“I will,” said Mrs. Ellison, who at that moment entered the room : “I am come to stand your friend, and hope to restore you to the favour of your benevolent guardian.” So saying, she took Fanny by the hand, and drawing her to her side, without any introductory compliments, for her mind was occupied with things of greater importance, she presented a piece of paper to Mr. Hardy, and inquired if he knew it.

“Yes, ma’am,” he replied ; “it is the lost note which was taken out of my pocket-book, and which

I have been so long in search of. May I know where you met with it?"

"You shall know all," replied she; "but I must have my own time, and go regularly to work. On calling here a few mornings ago, I found Fanny in great distress; and after some difficulty, learned that it was because she was suspected of having stolen two notes, of two pounds each, out of your pocket-book. Perfectly satisfied in my own mind that it was an undeserved charge, I determined to investigate the matter, and, if possible, discover proofs of her innocence, which should make others as well assured of it as I was myself. This, however, I found to be a much more difficult matter than I had suspected. My first business was to examine my own maid; who had, on the night the little girls were with me, attempted to relate some information about the domestic concerns of your house, which, as I did not at that time think I had any business with, I refused to listen to. As a matter of importance was now involved in them, I of course applied to her, and learned that Nanny, after she had dressed the young ladies, and sent them into the room to me, having staid to gossip, told her that Miss Emma, being desirous of going without one of her usual petticoats, had endeavoured to persuade Fanny to do the same; but, said the girl, Miss Fanny is such an

obstinate little creature that there is no managing her ; but, however, we tricked her at last, for I found she had put on Miss Emma's petticoat, instead of her own, and let it pass, without telling her of the mistake ; so that if Miss Hardy should find out that they have either of them been without, the mark will show that both Miss Emma's have been worn."

Here Mr. Hardy sighed deeply, and gave a look at his daughter, which implied that he saw at once how she had behaved. Emma blushed, and hung down her head in painful confusion ; Miss Hardy fidgeted on her chair, and Fanny wished Mrs. Ellison would not proceed any further with her vindication, for she felt inclined to suffer any thing, rather than her dear Emma and her kind benefactor should be so much distressed : Mrs. Ellison, however, proceeded :—
" This circumstance convinced me that Fanny had enemies ; to detect whom, and prove her innocence, I was more than ever determined upon. I still, however, found myself unable to discover any satisfactory proof of the suspicions which I entertained till yesterday, when the evidence of one of your own servants put me in a proper train for inquiry ; and if you will give me leave to call her, she shall herself repeat to you the account which she gave me, and which your too great fear of exposing Fanny to the servants has prevented your hearing before."

Mr. Hardy, without speaking, rang the bell, when Mrs. Ellison ordered the kitchen-maid into the room. "Tell your master," said she to the servant as she entered, "what you saw that was particular about Nanny's behaviour the morning on which the money was missed."

"I had sent Nanny into the parlour, sir," said the woman, "with a plate of toast, and when she came out again I thought she looked very queer; and I said to her, 'Nanny, what is the matter? has Miss Hardy been finding fault about any thing?'—'No,' said she, 'there is nothing the matter; but my master wants a basin of milk directly, so get it ready for him;' and then she ran out of the kitchen; and when the milk was ready, she was not there to take it in; so I went up stairs to seek for her, and as I was passing the young ladies' bed-room door, I saw Nanny screwing on the top of a little ivory box, and then shut Miss Fanny's drawer in a great hurry. 'Nanny,' says I, 'what are you doing there?'—'Only putting Miss Fanny's drawer in a little better order,' said she; 'for Miss Hardy is coming up after breakfast to look into it, and she would be angry if it was rough.' So I thought no more about it till Mrs. Ellison asked me some questions yesterday that put it all into my head again; for I never knew that you suspected Miss Fanny, sir. It came into my head too, when Mrs. Ellison spoke to me, that

when I went the other day into Mr. Yard's, the linen-draper, Nanny was there, and when she saw me, she appeared in a great hurry to pocket something he had just given her. I asked her what she had been buying. She said, 'Only some thread ;' but I thought she appeared very frightened lest I should ask any more about it." Mrs. Ellison now told the servant she might go, and then proceeded herself.

"On hearing this account, I went immediately to the linen-draper's shop, to inquire if he had sold any thing to your servant within the last four days, and found he had sold two yards of lace, at a guinea a yard. This seemed so strange a purchase for a servant to make, that I was convinced Miss Hardy must have sent her ; and the more so when I found she had paid for it with a guinea, and the rest silver, instead of a note. I was returning home, at a loss how further to proceed, when calling at my grocer's to pay a bill that I owed him, he gave me among my change for a larger one, a two-pound note. It was impossible for me to see a note of that amount, without having a suspicion that it might be the one in question ; I therefore asked him if he recollected of whom he had received it? 'Yes, ma'am,' answered he ; 'it is not likely I can forget, as it was almost forced upon me the other day by Mr. Hardy's servant, who wanted change for her master in a

great hurry ; and as they are very good customers, I was willing to oblige them, though it was very inconvenient to me.'

"I inquired what change he had given for it, and found that he had given a guinea and nineteen shillings in silver.

"And now, sir," added Mrs. Ellison, her countenance glowing with benevolent pleasure, "I think we have sufficiently substantiated the innocence of our little foundling."

"She is, indeed, acquitted with honour," said Mr. Hardy ; "and now it remains for us to learn for what purpose Nanny bought the expensive lace." As he spoke he had his hand upon the bell-handle to order her in ; but Emma, seeing his intention, sprang forward, and, throwing herself at his feet, exclaimed, "Oh stop, father, stop, and I will tell you all ! I will tell you how naughty I have been, and how unworthy I am of all your kindness !" She then, in as articulate a manner as her agitation would permit, told the part she had had in the business, and expressed in strong and convincing terms her repentance and sorrow.

"I trust you are sincere, Emma," said her father, when she had ceased speaking, and looking at her with an expression of heart-felt grief—"I hope and trust you are sincere ; though I own, that hope would

have been stronger, if your confession had been more voluntary, and not thus extorted from you by circumstances. I will trust, however, to your promises, convinced that your present humiliation is a much greater punishment than any I could inflict. And if what you now suffer does but serve to check your dangerous passion for dress, by convincing you of its inability to give either happiness or respectability, and lead you to seek such ornaments alone as those with which your friend is adorned, I may yet see the day when I shall again be proud of my daughter. Nanny, to whom I am willing to hope your faults are chiefly owing, shall not remain another night under my roof; and we must all do our utmost to make amends to poor Fanny for the undeserved ill-treatment she has met with from us, and to endeavour to obtain her forgiveness."

"Oh! do not talk of forgiveness," cried Fanny, her eyes streaming with tears of commiseration for her benefactor's distress, and his daughter's disgrace—"do not talk of forgiveness to one who owes every thing to you! But for you, I might now have been plunged in vice and misery; for though my aunt Jane first taught me to love virtue, my mind was too young to remember her instructions, had not you strengthened and improved every good lesson which I received from her,

THE
ORNAMENTS DISCOVERED.

PART THE SECOND.

Nothing deserving of notice occurred in Mr. Hardy's family from the time that we left Fanny restored to her patron's favour, till Emma and she had reached the age of fifteen; when the calm in which these years had glided away, was first interrupted by the death of their amiable friend Mrs. Ellison.

To Fanny this loss was particularly distressing, for that lady had ever acted towards her the part of a kind and attentive parent. But grief for this misfortune, however sincere, soon gave way to one of a still more afflicting nature; for her benevolent guardian, whom she had for some time observed to be much oppressed and agitated in spirits, being called away in great haste to London on business of importance, after a fatiguing journey, in extremely hot weather, and under great anxiety of mind, had suffered an attack of pleuritic fever, which proved so

rapid in its course, that his family only heard of his illness one post previous to that which brought the melancholy tidings of his decease. The loss of such a character could not fail of being sincerely regretted by all who were acquainted with his virtues; but it was particularly afflicting to those who had been daily in the habit of partaking of his kindness, and benefiting by his instructions. And the idea of his having laboured under sickness without their being near him to administer to his wants, and their being denied the melancholy satisfaction of performing the last sad duties to his remains, even though they knew him to be surrounded by friends who would kindly and faithfully perform all these tender offices, doubled the poignancy of their affliction. Miss Hardy's grief was of that violent and impatient nature which defies all consolation, and she indulged herself without the consideration that she did not suffer alone. Emma, too, wept incessantly, and remembered, with heart-felt anguish, every circumstance in which she had given pain to the kindest and best of fathers; while the gentle and affectionate Fanny, who had always, from the situations in which Providence had placed her, been accustomed to control her feelings, and make self only a secondary consideration, evinced that calm and settled sorrow which finds its only relief in administering

every little soothing and tender attention which could alleviate the sufferings of those around her. She sought not to make a display of her grief, but rather struggled against her feelings, that she might be the better enabled to fulfil her duty towards her friends. She endeavoured to sooth Miss Hardy's mind, by reminding her of the many comforts and blessings which she still enjoyed ; and to mitigate the acuteness of Emma's affliction by drawing her away from a contemplation of circumstances which were likely to increase it, and reminding her of the many testimonies of approbation and pleasure which her father had almost daily shown her during several years.

"These things, my dear Emma," she would say, "you ought to accustom yourself to dwell upon ; for they will be the strongest incitements to persevere in the conduct which he so highly approved."

"Yes," replied the weeping Emma, "I ought to recollect them, for they are the only things which can soften the remembrance of the many moments of distress which I have occasioned him, when he had to fly to you for that comfort which his only child refused to give him. Alas ! the longest life could not have made amends for all this ; and now, when I was only beginning to be sensible of my duty, I am deprived of the power of exhibiting its practice."

“No, my dear Emma, that is not the case,” said Fanny, in a gently remonstrating voice ; “for though your beloved father can no longer witness your improving virtues in this world, we may trust that he will rejoice in them, in that which is to come. Let us act as if his eye, as well as that of Omnipotence, were constantly upon us. It would be sinful in us to encourage any violent or extravagant feelings of grief at his being thus taken away from us ; for we know that the great Being who governs all things with so much goodness and mercy had some tender and benevolent design in removing him at this time. We know that whatever He decrees is best ; and we ought, therefore, to submit with patience and resignation to his will.”

Though Fanny was the first both to speak of resignation and to practise its duties, she had by far the most difficult task to perform ; for, besides the almost unbounded affection which she had always felt for the benevolent friend she had lost, she soon found that her own more immediate situation would be greatly altered.

From the time when Mr. Hardy had been made fully sensible of the ill-will which his sister bore to the little orphan, he had avoided putting her under her power more than could possibly be avoided ; and had shown such a determined resolution, that

his *protégée* should in all things be treated as his daughter, that Miss Hardy, when there was no longer any hope of getting her discarded, found it her wisest way to comply with as good a grace as she could. Now, however, things were changed; her brother was no longer present to assert the right of the unprotected orphan; and as soon as she felt herself at liberty to indulge her dislike to Fanny, who had in vain endeavoured to conciliate her affections, she had begun to be aware that her brother's circumstances, at the time of his decease, were not such as to gratify her wishes with respect to her niece, much less to enable her to support an additional burden. Her conduct, therefore, soon began to exhibit that she considered her as an encumbrance, which Fanny's penetration soon discovered, though she delicately forbore to notice it.

Mr. Hardy, in the early part of his life, had been engaged in an extensive banking-house in London; and though he had long ceased to be a partner, his confidence in its respectability and wealth was so unlimited that he had not taken the usual precaution of having his name legally withdrawn; so that on failure his property was involved in the general ruin. It was long before its affairs could be so arranged as to enable a judgment to be formed of the extent to which he was a sufferer; and his family were

kept six months in ignorance, with respect to their prospects. He had left a will, in which he had bequeathed to Fanny two thousand pounds, and had settled twice that sum on his sister for her life. The remainder of his property, whatever it might be, was of course his daughter's: but what was their dismay and consternation when his executors were at length obliged to inform them that his property was all condemned, and would go but a short way towards satisfying his creditors; and that their clothes and books, with as much furniture as was sufficient for a very small house, was all that they could secure to them.

Thunderstruck at this intelligence, Emma and her aunt looked at each other in an agony of despair. Miss Hardy, whose violent temper was but ill calculated to struggle with misfortune, burst into a paroxysm of grief and rage: "And is this," cried she, "what my foolish brother has brought up two fine ladies for,—to leave them beggars? He had much better have put his own daughter to service, than have added another to a family which he could not support. Who would not have thought that he abounded in wealth, instead of being overwhelmed in debt?"

"Oh, Miss Hardy," cried Fanny, shocked and distressed beyond measure, at this reflection on her friend's memory, "do not blame my guardian for

misfortunes that he could neither foresee nor prevent. Even his creditors, who have suffered by them, do not accuse him of imprudence ; and the distress which he suffered at so unexpected a stroke of fortune, we well know to have been the cause of our last and greatest calamity, the love of himself."

"My dear Fanny," said Emma, as her friend thus strove to sooth Miss Hardy's mind, "how gently and amiably you bear your own share in these calamities ; you do not seem to remember that you are yourself involved in them !"

"Nor has she any right to do so," replied Miss Hardy, whose selfishness overcame every feeling of justice. "She knows, that however things have turned out, she is still a gainer ; for she has been clothed and fed for so many years ; and though my brother left her a legacy, it was out of his bounty that she would have received it ; she is not, consequently, deprived of any right."

"No," answered Fanny, unmoved by this remark, "I am not indeed deprived of any right, for I have already received a great deal more than I can ever be sufficiently grateful for. I have been clothed and fed for many years, it is true, but that is a small part of my obligations ; for my kind benefactor has bestowed on me an education which will at once enable me to provide for myself, and perhaps assist

those to whom I owe so much, as his representatives. I have no cause to repine, for I remember my original situation, and know that whatever may befall me, I can never be reduced to the low state from which I was taken; for then I suffered under the worst of evils—poverty, ignorance, and helplessness. It is for you, my beloved Emma, that I grieve; for you have never known any thing but prosperity, and are but ill calculated to bear the trials of the world.”

“We must bury ourselves in the country, where we shall not be known,” said Emma; “for I should be ashamed to show myself in a town where I have always appeared under circumstances so different to our present.”

“Ashamed,” replied Fanny, “to show yourself in a town where your excellent father was known! Is it possible, Emma, that you can be so unconscious of the estimation in which his character was held? Even I, who am only the child of his bounty, am proud of the title; how then should you feel, who are his darling and only child? I do not wish, however,” continued she, “to dissuade you from the idea of retiring into the country, for it will certainly be best suited to your circumstances; and there is a spot I believe at present within our power, to which of all others I should wish to go.”

“Where is that?” asked Emma; “for if it be your choice, I am sure it is a prudent one.”

“It is the little cottage that my aunt Jane used to live in. Your father, who, as you know, found it out a long time since, told me, only the night before he went away, that in passing through Ipswich a few days before, he had observed it as standing empty, and asked me in joke if he should take it for my country-house. I have since learned that it is still unoccupied; and that the rent is only five pounds a year. It is a neater and prettier little spot than we shall be able to get anywhere else, at so easy a rate; and if Miss Hardy will give me leave, I will write to inquire about it immediately.”

That lady, who declared she did not care where she went, provided she was removed to a distance from the spot in which she had lived in so different a style, gave Fanny leave to manage the business as she liked; for she found that when reduced so low as not to be able to keep any hired assistants, the hitherto despised Fanny would be very necessary to her. To Emma too the proposal was very agreeable. Fanny therefore immediately set about the necessary inquiries, and had the satisfaction to find that the cottage was still at liberty, and that they might have immediate possession. Nothing could exceed Fanny’s activity and management, in

the arrangement of every thing previous to their departure. Miss Hardy had very little trouble or anxiety on the occasion : and, desirous of saving her friends as much as possible, Fanny proposed that the furniture should be sent off, and that she should accompany it a week previous to Miss Hardy's and Emma's entering upon their new situation ; that she might have time to put things in order, and make the little cottage as comfortable as possible for them.

“How kind and considerate Fanny is to us,” said Emma to her aunt, as her friend, on receiving Miss Hardy's sanction to her proposal, left the room to make some necessary preparations ; “how little she cares for her own, and how willing she is to undertake even the part of a servant, for the sake of adding to our comfort !”

“Oh ! let Fanny alone for a little management,” said Miss Hardy ; “she knows what she is about. How can she expect to be maintained, unless she makes herself useful ? She knows that service must be her portion somewhere or other, and she, no doubt, chooses to serve those with whom she is acquainted, in preference to going among strangers.”

“But there is no occasion for her to be degraded to a servant's place,” replied Emma ; “the edu-

cation she has received, and the great proficiency she has attained in every thing she attempted to learn, gives her a right to look forward to a very different situation. As a governess, she is perhaps at present too young to engage ; but, as an under-teacher in a school, many people would be glad to have her ; and she will, I have no doubt, get forward, as soon as her abilities are known."

"And you may depend on it," returned Miss Hardy, "she will not be long in seeking out a better situation ; for now that your poor father is gone, she will care little for us ; but there must be some time before one can be found, and till then, she knows it is necessary she should do all she can to lighten the burden of maintaining her. Indeed, I do not know," continued Miss Hardy, bursting into tears, "how we are to manage to live ourselves ; for all that we shall be able to muster will not, I believe, produce us thirty pounds a year."

Emma had not time to reply, before Fanny came running into the room with tears in her eyes, but joy beaming in her countenance : she held an open letter in her hand, which she put into Emma's without saying a word.

"What letter is this ?" asked Emma.

"Read it," said she, "and read it aloud, that your aunt may hear the good news." The letter

was from a gentleman who had been left executor to their friend Mr. Ellison's will, in consequence of whose absence from home at the time of her death, it could not be opened till his return, which had only taken place a day or two before. He wrote to inform Fanny that there was a legacy bequeathed to her by that lady, of one thousand pounds, to be paid immediately on her decease, and which he was very sorry had been so long delayed.

"This is, indeed, good news," said Emma, as she finished reading the letter; "and I most sincerely rejoice, Fanny, that you will be benefited by the kindness of one of your friends at least. This sum, with your activity and industry, will enable you to live comfortably and almost independently."

"Say, rather," replied Fanny, "it will make *us* a little more comfortable."

"No," returned Emma, "we have no right to it; nor have you any more than will barely serve yourself. You must not, therefore, think of depriving yourself of common necessities from a generous feeling towards us."

"And do you think it possible, my dearest Emma, that I could have a sixpence without sharing it with you and your aunt? Could you think me so ungrateful for the bounty of my benefactor?" said Fanny, with generous warmth. "Believe me, the

pleasure which I have received from this proof of the kindness of our excellent friend is much more on account of its putting it into my power to give a small proof of my gratitude and affection, than from any advantage to myself. It has relieved my mind from a load ; for I could not bear the thoughts of leaving you, yet knew not how to think of staying, to be a burden upon your aunt, which she could so ill support : but now, I hope, this small addition to her income, with the services which it may be in my power to render in other respects, will still allow me to remain with those I so tenderly love."

This proof of disinterested and generous affection, for the first time excited a suspicion in Miss Hardy's mind, that she had been mistaken in her judgment of Fanny's character ; and she said, with much greater kindness than usual, "It would, indeed, be a pity for you to be separated, after you have lived so long and so happily together."

"I have no fear of our being otherwise than comfortable," said Fanny ; "for I think, when we are a little known in the neighbourhood to which we are going, we may, perhaps, be able to begin a little school. We may commence, you know, on an humble plan, and rise by degrees, as we become better known, and as people gain confidence in our abilities."

In this manner did Fanny's active mind employ itself in executing the present business, which required her exertions, and in forming plans of future usefulness. She was obliged to postpone her departure for Ipswich a few days on account of her legacy, which the gentleman who paid it kindly assisted her to place in proper hands. As she was to receive a year's interest immediately, she was enabled to discharge the expenses attending its receipt without encroaching on the capital; and another half-year's interest having then become due, she put twenty-five pounds into Miss Hardy's hand, and desired it might be used as general property. After which, she set out to prepare the cottage for its future inhabitants.

It is impossible to describe Fanny's feelings on again taking possession of the habitation of her earliest years; every part of which she perfectly recollected; and almost fancied, as she looked around, that she should again meet the dear friend who had given such charms to the spot, though the place altogether was much altered; for it had been occupied by people who had kept it in very indifferent order. The little garden too, before the door, was far from what it used to be when in her aunt Jane's possession. One rose-bush, that grew just under the window between two honeysuckles which twined

round the casement, was the only thing that she could make herself perfectly sure had been planted by her aunt's hands. On that bush, however, she looked with the affection of an old friend. "You were a small slip," said she inwardly, looking at the tree, "when she planted you : I was standing by her at the time. 'It is a tender twig at present, like yourself,' said she to me ; you will both need great care in rearing ; but I hope you will both reward me one day or other for the trouble, by arriving at that perfection which I should be so happy to witness.' Here we now both are in full health and vigour,—but where, oh ! where is the kind hand which fostered us?" A tear started into her eye at the thought, and she turned away, overcome by the mournful sentiments which reflection excited.

The cottage consisted of one room in front on the ground floor ; this Fanny made into a neat little parlour : and a small one, behind, served as a kitchen : and a good sized bed-room, extending over them both, furnished with two neat little camp-beds with white hangings, and window-curtains of the same kind, had a very snug and comfortable appearance. She managed herself to adorn the walls of the parlour with a plain simple paper ; and arranged the furniture, which was all very good, with

such taste and elegance as was wonderful for her years.

Her last business was to get the garden weeded and put into a little order ; which she had just accomplished when Miss Hardy and her niece arrived. Emma was delighted with the appearance of the place, and even her aunt condescended to express something bordering on satisfaction ; but habit had become too deeply rooted in her mind to be ever entirely overcome, and unfortunately her influence over that of her niece frequently checked the more amiable propensities of Emma's youthful heart. Pride and vanity had been so early planted there, and so constantly nourished by her aunt's ill-judging kindness, that even her father's watchful endeavours, and her friend's excellent example, had not been able to root it out. When, therefore, Miss Hardy looked around, and said, with a stifled sigh, "It is all very well for those who have no right to look for any thing better ; but is very unfit for us, who have been accustomed to other things"—Emma immediately began to compare the house, the neatness of which had at first so much pleased her, with that which she had just left, and at the comparison shrank from the window, for fear any one should see her as the inhabitant of so humble an abode. Fanny saw with concern the effect of

these thoughts on the mind of her friend ; but, conscious that nothing but time would have power to overcome them, she forbore to make any remark ; and kindly trying to turn her thoughts to another subject, “ I think,” said she, “ our little parlour needs nothing now but a set of neat book-shelves to make it look quite complete : but that piece of work must fall to your share, Emma ; and if your aunt will give us leave to have some made of plain wood, and you will stain and varnish them, in which you so much excel, they will, when filled with some of our pretty books, be a great improvement to the room.” Miss Hardy, who was much gratified by Fanny’s thus applying to her for leave, with as much respect as when in a more dependent situation, very graciously said, “ I can have no objection to any little unexpensive plan of ornamenting our house.” And Emma, though she seemed to have lost that activity of mind which was necessary to set herself to work, was much pleased at having it marked out for her, and soon began to form a pattern suited to the work proposed.

Time gradually proceeded, but very differently, with the three inhabitants of the little cottage. Fanny, who was kept in very constant employment, for they had very little hired assistance for the work of the family, which consequently fell almost entirely

upon her, was so happy in the thought of being of service to the daughter and sister of her beloved guardian, and of thus repaying a part of her obligations to him, that time seemed to fly, in her estimation, on rapid wings, and each day appeared too short for its various duties. She, besides, was very careful to devote a portion of every day to keeping herself in practice in the different branches of education, in which she had already gained a proficiency; and for this purpose she was obliged to rise much earlier in the morning than Miss Hardy or Emma, for she found that even after she had done all which appeared to her at the time necessary, Miss Hardy, who had been so long accustomed to have a number of servants at command, always found so many things for her to do that she could get forward with little else than attending upon her.

That lady's chief happiness had always depended upon dress and visiting; and having, unfortunately, never cultivated a taste for either reading or working, she found time intolerably irksome to her. Her principal employment was in new modelling different articles of her own or her niece's wardrobe, to make them look as smart and fashionable as possible; and her almost only subject of conversation consisted in lamenting their sad change of circumstances, and the different prospects which her darling

had once enjoyed. On this theme she sometimes had an opportunity of expatiating copiously, to a very respectable elderly woman who filled the situation of housekeeper in a gentleman's family which was near them. The lady and gentleman whom Mrs. Sams served, having been from home for a considerable time, she was almost uncontrolled mistress of the house and grounds ; and, being pleased with the appearance of the young people, she very kindly took an opportunity of inviting them to make use of the park and gardens to walk in. In this way she was introduced to Miss Hardy's acquaintance : who, for want of any other companion, condescended sometimes to associate with her, and allow her the privilege of listening to her complaints. Mrs. Sams, however, was a good-tempered woman, and knowing how to feel for a person who had experienced so great a reverse of fortune, listened with tolerable patience. Besides, she was much interested in the looks and manners of the girls, and was desirous of cultivating their acquaintance ; in the hope that she might some time or other have it in her power to be of service to them.

Emma, who had sufficient good sense to know that it was wrong to indulge in discontent, yet did not possess sufficient strength of mind to enable her, without some additional motive, to rise superior to

her situation, was much the greatest sufferer by the change. She was spiritless and inactive, and felt unequal to the exertion of taking proper exercise ; and it was with great alarm and concern that her aunt and Fanny saw her health gradually decline. Mrs. Sams and Miss Hardy prescribed various medicines, but without effect. She had no visible complaint, yet she grew thin, the colour forsook her cheeks, and her strength evidently declined. Fanny was exceedingly alarmed at these symptoms, and prevailed upon Miss Hardy to apply for medical advice ; and though Mrs. Sams said she was sure no doctor knew better how to treat her than she did, one was sent for, who ordered that her mind should be kept as cheerful as possible, that she should use exercise very freely, and take a great deal of bark and port wine. It was now, for the first time, that Fanny became sensible of the miseries attending on poverty ; she had never before felt a desire for any thing that she could not easily forego : but now that she heard that wine was necessary for the restoration of Emma's health, and learned from Miss Hardy that the sum of two guineas was all the money which she had remaining, while she recollected that it would be a full month before they should have any more due to them, she felt more misery than she had ever before been sensible of.

Nothing which affected herself could have struck half so deep ; for she trembled at the idea of her beloved Emma's being deprived of the necessary support which her delicate state of health required, and perhaps sinking so low that, when further aid was in their power, it might come too late to have the desired effect. Unfortunately, too, Miss Hardy, who had little consideration for the feelings of others, had declared the state of their finances in Emma's presence, who, alarmed at the idea of involving her friends in debt and difficulties, positively refused to have any wine bought for her. "Only think," said she, as her aunt talked of ordering wine for her use (for Miss Hardy had never been accustomed to regulate her wishes by prudence), "only recollect that a gallon of wine would cost nearly half of the money which we have all to live upon for a month to come ; and if we involve our next half-year's income by contracting debts before we receive it, what state shall we be in by the time that the next allowance becomes due ? You know, Fanny, these are arguments that you have often used to check any unnecessary expense, and I must now give you them back. Let me go on as usual ; I may get better without, but I am sure I never shall with the aid of medicine, which I should think was depriving my friends of necessary subsistence." Fanny, who

saw that in the present state of Emma's health and spirits the distress of incurring such an expense would indeed counteract any good effect which she might otherwise derive from the medicine, yielded without pressing the matter further ; but determined to use some other means to procure what she was convinced was so necessary for the restoration of her friend's health and strength ; and, therefore, while Miss Hardy sat weeping, and bemoaning her hard fortune, she set about active exertions to improve it. As her object was to raise a little money, and as quickly as possible, she determined to go and consult their friend Mrs. Sams about the best means of doing so. She found the old lady within, and at liberty, and soon told her the object of her visit. "If you could put me in the way of making a little money by my own work, unknown to my friends," said she, "I should be very grateful ; and I hope the manner in which I should execute it would prevent your feeling any regret at having recommended me."

"I have no doubt of it, my dear," said Mrs. Sams, who had always shown a particular partiality for Fanny, "and you could not have made the application at a better time ; for I had some fine shirts sent to me only yesterday, to get made for a gentleman, and you shall have one of them

home with you immediately, if you please." Fanny's expressive eyes glistened with delight at hearing this; which Mrs. Sams, observing, said, with a smile, "I suppose you want some pretty piece of dress that you do not think Miss Hardy would buy for you. Well, well, it is all very natural and very fair when you are willing to work for it." Fanny was sorry that Mrs. Sams should suspect her of so mean a motive, but she had too great an objection to tell any thing which might seem like praising herself, to attempt to explain what was really the case; and she took her leave, highly gratified at the success of her application, and with a promise from Mrs. Sams of another shirt as soon as she returned the first, provided it was made to her satisfaction, which she felt very confident would be the case.

As she knew her only time for work would be in the morning before the others were up, Fanny could hardly sleep from the fear of not rising soon enough; and as Miss Hardy and Emma were accustomed to her getting up early, she was not afraid of exciting their curiosity by this intention. As she went about her work with all the alacrity of a willing mind, she soon had every thing put in order for Miss Hardy's coming down stairs, and then sat down to her sewing, in which she had made so much progress before she was interrupted, that she found she

was likely to get it accomplished much sooner than she had expected ; a reflection which served to comfort and cheer her, when she saw Emma come down stairs pale and languid, and unable to taste the breakfast that she had taken pains to make nice and tempting for her.

“Do not look so anxiously at me, Fanny,” said Emma, as she saw her friend’s eyes, which always spoke the feelings of her mind, fixed upon her with a look of solicitude,—“do not look at me so ; I shall soon be better. Enjoy your own breakfast, for it will do me more good to see you eat than to do so myself.”

“There is little danger of my not eating,” replied Fanny, recollecting herself, and feeling sorry for having discovered so much uneasiness to the invalid, whose spirits it was necessary to keep up ; “the only fear is, that I get quite vulgar in my appetite ; for my work gives me an excellent relish for my breakfast every morning.”

“That,” said Miss Hardy, “is because it belongs to the situation in which you were born, which obliged you to work for your own bread, so it does not do you any harm ; but the case is very different with my poor Emma and myself ; for we never before knew any thing but what was very superior, you know, so that it is no wonder it does us harm.”

“It ill becomes us to talk of superiority before Fanny,” said Emma, blushing indignantly at her aunt’s speech ; “ for she shows a greatness of mind far above any little advantage of fortune which we ever possessed.”

“I am sure,” replied Miss Hardy (who, since her interest was so much connected with Fanny’s friendship, had been much more circumspect in her language to her), “I am sure I was far from meaning any thing disrespectful ; I only meant to say, that as Fanny was not born a gentlewoman, it is not likely that she should suffer so much from not being able to appear any longer as one, as they do who have never known any thing else ; and I hope Fanny will not be offended at me for saying so.”

“Not in the least, ma’am,” answered Fanny, with a look and tone of sweetness and good-nature which showed more real greatness than the most elevated ancestry could have conferred.

The fourth morning saw the completion of Fanny’s first shirt, but as she was ignorant of the usual price of such things, she felt anxious and uncertain whether she had yet gained as much as would amount to the price of a bottle of wine ; for she was too prudent in her ideas to think of getting a larger quantity than that at first, till it was seen how far it answered the desired end. On taking her work to

Mrs. Sams, however, that lady, after declaring herself highly satisfied with the manner in which it was done, put six shillings into her hand. Delighted beyond measure at the sum, she exclaimed before she recollected that she was discovering her secret, "Oh! this will pay for a bottle of wine at once." "A bottle of wine!" repeated Mrs. Sams, with surprise.

Fanny recollected herself, and finding she had excited the good old lady's curiosity, thought it better to explain herself entirely, than make any appearance of affected modesty in endeavouring to conceal it. Mrs. Sams, who could not but admire both the action and the delicate manner in which it was done, kindly promised her every assistance in her power, both in keeping the secret, and accomplishing her object; and offered at the same time to send a servant for the wine, which she knew it would not be pleasant for Fanny to purchase herself. This offer was very thankfully accepted, and Fanny soon returned home with what she flattered herself would do much towards the preservation of a life so dear to her.

As she was in the habit of going out frequently with a little basket, for the purpose of bringing home any thing which happened to be wanted in the family, she had no difficulty in getting the wine into

the house without its being observed by either Miss Hardy or Emma ; and she did not mention the subject till the usual time for Emma's taking her bark, which she brought to her, with a glass of wine to drink after it. "Wine !" exclaimed Emma, on observing the glass and its contents ; "where did it come from, Fanny ?"

"From a friend," answered Fanny, "who is very anxious to see you restored to your usual health and strength."

"I know who it is," returned Emma ; "it is Mrs. Sams ; you have been lamenting to her that you could not get any wine for me, and she has sent this in consequence of the hint."

"I hope, Emma, you know me better than to believe I would take any mean way of procuring a thing, however much I might wish for it."

"I am sure you would not intend to do anything mean," answered Emma ; "but you might speak of it without meaning it as a hint to Mrs. Sams, and I am sorry she has taken it so ; both because I do not think it will do me good, and as I dislike to receive a favour from any one so far beneath me."

"My dear Emma," said Fanny, in a kindly remonstrating tone, "you ought not to speak in that manner of good Mrs. Sams, for she is both a respectable

woman, and quite your equal at present in situation ; and if, in spite of these things she must still be looked meanly upon, unless she had enjoyed the advantage of being born genteelly, even for that I believe, however, she has a right to your respect, as she is a near relative of the family in which she lives. *She*, therefore, may be looked upon as a friend ; though if nothing but genteel birth will do, I fear *I* never can."

" Oh ! Fanny, do not talk so," exclaimed Emma, bursting into tears, as she threw her arms round the neck of her friend ; " are you not my friend, my sister, my mother, and every thing that is dear to me ? Without you I could never have lived after the loss of my dear father, and it is through your example and assistance only that I have any chance of being worthy of the name of his daughter."

Fanny kissed her affectionately, and, when fearful of the effect which agitation might have on her delicate state of health, said, in a playful voice, " Wine is said to make people merry, but as the sight of it has had a very contrary influence upon you, I must insist that you drink it up immediately, and try if the taste has any better effect."

Emma had just dried up her tears and swallowed the wine, when her aunt came into the room, who expressed surprise at the addition which Emma had

received to her medicine ; but on her niece's repeating her conjectures about where it came from, she appeared perfectly satisfied ; not that she believed with Emma that it came from Mrs. Sams, for she knew if it had been so, Fanny, who was not at all in the habit of dealing in secrets, would have said so at once ; but because she felt persuaded that some trinket or something which was exclusively Fanny's own property had been parted with, for the purpose of procuring it ; and though she was little concerned about the means by which it was obtained, provided she herself had not to make the sacrifice, she was very sure Emma would refuse to take any thing which was so dearly purchased.

Though Fanny had not the advantage of being born a lady, and had not, therefore, in Miss Hardy's opinion any right to rest or indulgence (for this foolish woman did not consider that it is education and habit, not mere birth, which makes people what they are), her altered looks soon began to show the effect of want of sleep, added to the great exertions which she had every day to make ; for Emma's increased indisposition, besides a want of the inclination for exertion, threw every thing which required labour on the ever active Fanny. This alteration in her looks, however, did not pass unnoticed by Emma, who, though so extremely vain, and so prone

to jealousy of every other person, had never experienced that feeling towards her friend. Without acknowledging her superiority, she felt it too much to admit of competition ; but that superiority gave her no pain, for she saw that it was unknown to her who possessed it. She felt nothing but concern, therefore, when she observed that the fine bloom which was so natural to Fanny's cheek had faded, and the sparkling animation of her eyes was exchanged for an expression of heaviness and languor. She remonstrated with earnestness against her rising so early ; but Fanny declared that early rising was healthful and serviceable to her. The second shirt was not, however, finished with the same spirit which had accompanied the first, though she was not less diligent ; for the conviction which Fanny had felt that wine was to be of such essential service to her friend was now considerably abated ; and the enlivener Hope no longer cheered her labour. Emma had taken three glasses a day for four days, and the first bottle was nearly exhausted without any benefit seeming to have arisen from it. Some trifling circumstances had come in the way which had prevented Fanny's getting her shirt finished on the fourth morning, and she arose on the following exceedingly anxious to have it completed, and to get another bottle of wine before Emma was aware

of the first being gone. She had just finished it, and was holding it up, to look if any thing was wanting, when she was startled with an exclamation from Emma, who, observing that Fanny had risen much earlier than usual of late, and feeling some curiosity to know what engaged her attention, had got up, and coming down stairs softly, entered the room just as the shirt was exhibiting. In a moment the truth occurred to her ; and she saw that her friend had taken the colour from her own cheek in endeavouring to restore it to hers.

“Nay, do not attempt to conceal your work, Fanny,” said Emma, as Fanny, with the confusion almost of a culprit, folded the shirt up hastily together : “you need not try to hide it, for I see what it is, and know at once how the wine is come by, that I have been drinking. But you do not need to get any more for me.”

“You surely would not deprive me of the pleasure of working for you?” said Fanny, tenderly.

“I will only deprive you of that pleasure by making it unnecessary,” replied Emma, in a firm and determined tone. “I believe my health depends more on my spirits than on medicines ; and I will try if I am not capable of exertions for my friends as well as you.”

“Oh, then, you will indeed make me happy,” re-

plied Fanny with animation ; “ and I will gladly give up the pleasure of working for you, for the higher one of seeing you independent.”

“ I wanted a motive strong enough to induce me to exert myself ; and I now have it in the duty which I shall feel of repaying my obligation to you,” returned Emma.

“ As you cannot, however,” said Fanny, smiling with more heart-felt pleasure than she had done for some time, “ make yourself strong all at once, you must, I think, submit to be obliged to me a little longer ; and allow me to get another bottle of wine, which you see is already paid for,” holding up the finished shirt as she spoke.

“ No,” returned Emma, “ I will have no more wine. I will encourage cheerfulness and contentment, which will, I am sure, do me much more good. I will give over comparing what I was with what I am ; and learn to become higher by becoming better. I will accustom myself to take more exercise : I know I cannot bear much at present, but I will begin with a little, and increase as I find my strength improve.”

Fanny, who was fully persuaded that such a prescription as she had planned for herself was more likely to be of service to her friend than any thing else which could be offered, acquiesced without

further entreaty ; and Emma felt strengthened in her resolution by the lively expression of pleasure which she saw playing over Fanny's animated countenance, as she exclaimed, " Oh, my beloved benefactor, why can you not witness this happy moment !"

As a proof of her determination to gain a victory over her pride, Emma requested Fanny to allow her to take the finished shirt to Mrs. Sams, and bring her another back ; for it was agreed between them, on condition that Fanny would promise not to rise sooner than her usual time, and would permit Emma to give her occasional help, that it would be right to avail themselves of the opportunity thus afforded them of making a little money ; which they determined to hold in store for any particular occasion. As Fanny, however, was very sure that it would be a great mortification to Miss Hardy's mind to think that a member of her family should work for hire, and as she had little hope of curing her of faults which time had so deeply rooted in her mind, she proposed to Emma that her aunt should not know any thing about it ; and Emma, being desirous that the money which Fanny worked for should be her own, which she was sure would not be the case if her aunt knew she possessed it, readily agreed to the proposal.

Things went on thus very quietly and comfortably with them for some weeks ; and Emma's health improved so fast, that she was now able to take the principal work of the family off Fanny's hands, who often smiled and said, she was now quite a fine lady, though she felt some difficulty in accommodating herself to her dignities.

"You are not out of your element as a lady," rejoined Emma ; "but I am a very awkward servant. I find that, however low the situation, it requires abilities to excel in it. The rooms are far from so neat, or our meals so nicely cooked, as they were before my aunt changed her servant : but I hope I shall improve by practice." To Miss Hardy, however, it was a severe trial to see her darling reduced to so menial an office ; and they had few meals which were not seasoned with her tears and lamentations.

They were one morning sitting at the breakfast-table, she as usual bemoaning Emma's hard fate, while her niece endeavoured to assure her that she had never felt more really happy than she did at that moment, for she had never before enjoyed so much self-approbation, when a servant arrived from Mrs. Sams, requesting the company of the ladies that afternoon to tea, to meet some London friends whom she had been for some time expecting.

The invitation was accepted ; and Miss Hardy, when the servant was gone, expressed herself much pleased with Mrs. Sams's respect in sending for them so early to introduce them to her friends. But soon a new misery arose : the mourning which they had worn nearly twelve months was not now good enough to appear in ; and there was not time to renew it, even supposing their finances had permitted them to do so ; what then was to be done ? Miss Hardy, who could not bring herself, even when called upon by necessity, to practise that economy to which she had ever been a stranger, proposed, as the only alternative, that they should buy some velvet and bugles, and make some trimmings to ornament their frocks, and set them off to as much advantage as possible. Emma, still tinctured with her early passion for dress (which had only lain dormant from not having had occasion to be called forth), though conscious of the impropriety of spending money on any thing so unnecessary, was yet unable to reconcile her mind to appearing before such genteel and fashionable people as she had reason to expect to see, in the only dress which she had to wear, and proposed that they should frame some excuse for declining the visit. Fanny, however, suggested another plan. "It is now nearly twelve months," said she, "since we put on this dress ; and though

the usual time of mourning is not yet expired, I am sure if the beloved object for whom it was assumed were here to advise, he would wish that an unmeaning form should give way to motives of higher importance. It can signify little whether we put off our black dresses at ten months' end or twelve; for our hearts must still wear mourning: and as to the opinion of the world, no one but ourselves, I believe, knows the tale of our misfortune. We have an abundance of handsome clothes to wear, and have little occasion, therefore, to run into expense for more."

The only objections which could possibly be made to this plan were, that Miss Hardy said Emma looked better in black than any other colour, as it showed her delicate complexion to advantage; and Emma was afraid that all their frocks would look very old-fashioned, as they had been lying by so long. "If we could make our spotted muslin frocks up in the manner we saw that beautiful dress the other day at the dress-maker's, where we went with Mrs. Sams," said Emma, "they would look very well; but there is not muslin enough for that shape, even if we had time for the improvement."

After some consideration, however, it was determined that the spotted muslin frocks should be worn; and that Fanny, whose province at present

it was to do what sewing was wanted, should make any little alterations which the time and materials would allow, and which Emma very willingly left to her judgment, as she had the highest opinion of her taste. Emma felt much satisfaction that Fanny's work kept her employed up stairs all the day; and though very anxious to see the alterations which she had made, the mere anticipation of which gave her a great deal of pleasure, she magnanimously forbore to go to see them till summoned by the workwoman herself, lest it should show a distrust of her abilities. At length it got so late that she began to fear they would scarcely have time to dress; and she determined, therefore, after some hesitation, to go and see what Fanny was about.

"I was just coming for you," said Fanny, meeting her on the stairs, "to see if you were ready for dressing."

"I began to think it full time to set about it," replied Emma. "But," added she, looking at Fanny as they entered the bed-room together, "I find you have got the start of me, for you are already equipped."

"I dressed first," said Fanny, "that I might be at liberty to assist your aunt and you; for I thought you would both be the better for a little help."

"You are very kind and considerate to us, and I only wish you could make me look as well as you do," returned Emma, who was struck with the elegant simplicity of her friend's appearance. "But how is this?" exclaimed she, looking more nearly at the dress which had attracted her admiration; "you have not got on the frock you intended to wear; you have nothing but a plain cambric muslin one on."

"I preferred wearing this," replied Fanny. "But come, make haste and get done with the glass before your aunt wants it."

"And must I put on a plain frock too!" asked Emma, in a tone of disappointment, at the downfall of the hopes, which she had been indulging all day, of surprising the strangers with her smart and genteel appearance.

"Oh no," said Fanny, "here is yours;" and she held out as she spoke this, a spotted muslin frock, made up in the same manner as that which Emma had admired in the morning, and which she had only been able to accomplish by putting her own frock in addition to Emma's, while she had deprived herself of every scrap of lace to adorn it.

Emma stood for some moments in silent admiration, with her eyes turned first on Fanny and then on the frock; at length she said, "And so this is the dress which you have prepared for me?"

“Yes ; do you not think it very pretty ?”

“Exceedingly so ; and should have been delighted with it, if I had not seen at the same time the superior ornaments which you have kept to yourself.”

“What do you mean ?” asked Fanny, in a tone of unaffected simplicity.

“I mean those ornaments which my father told me of, the very first day that you came to us, but of which I never saw the full beauty till this moment. So let this handsome dress be put away,” added she, in a calm, determined voice, taking it out of Fanny’s hand as she spoke, and folding it deliberately up and putting it into the drawer : “for I am determined you shall not eclipse me, as you expected to have done this evening.”

“Then all my labour will be lost,” said Fanny, in a half-angry tone, though delighted with the ingenuousness and good sense of her friend ; “and this handsome frock is to lie, perhaps, till it is as old-fashioned as it was before this alteration.”

“No matter for the frock,” replied Emma, calmly ; “let its fashions take their chance ; but mine, you shall see, are improved.”

“She then dressed herself with great alacrity in a plain frock, the same as Fanny’s, which she had just got on when her aunt came up stairs and ex-

pressed great astonishment at the sight of the very simple dress of the two friends. Emma, however, who did not expect to make her a convert to Fanny's new style of ornament, only said, in an indifferent manner, that they had decided upon those frocks as the most suitable, considering the time of mourning was hardly expired. This was not at all satisfactory reasoning to Miss Hardy, who declared she had come up stairs to tell them she did not feel herself quite well, and had therefore given up the idea of accompanying them ; a resolution which she was very glad she had adopted, for she should have been ashamed to appear in company with them, in such dresses. The girls, both almost in the same instant, offered to give up their visit, to remain with her, if she was unwell ; but this she positively forbade, saying, that though she had a pain in her head, which would make it unpleasant to her to go into company, it was not of sufficient importance to require either of them to stay with her : and they at length set out for the Hall, though both feeling dissatisfied at the idea of leaving Miss Hardy alone.

They found their friend Mrs. Sams in great spirits on their arrival ; for, in addition to the company of her friends, who were a lady and gentleman and their two daughters, she had just received a letter to announce the intention of the family under

whom she lived to come and pay a visit to their long-deserted mansion. "This will give us some life again," said she; "we have been very dead and stupid for a long time, but this will keep us all alive. You will find this place quite different then, young ladies, to what it has ever been since you came to it;" added she, addressing Fanny and Emma.

"It is not likely that it will make much difference with us, at least for the better," said Fanny; "for you will have less time to spare for us, and we shall no longer be able to enjoy the beautiful grounds."

"Don't fear that," replied Mrs. Sams, "for they will not make that change which great people too often make, of harassing their servants with company and racketing, and disturbing all the neighbourhood with their disorderly doings. My master and mistress are gay without being dissipated; and liberal without being ostentatious. You may depend upon it, they will not be long before they make themselves acquainted with the families around them; and, instead of depriving those so worthy of the privilege of enjoying their grounds, they will, I am sure, only try to discover how they can best serve you."

It is but justice to Emma to say, that instead of thinking that she might perhaps have an opportunity

some time of appearing before them in the handsome dress which Fanny had just made her, she only considered the advantage which it might be of to Fanny, to be known by people who had it in their power to enable her to turn her abilities to account: for, though Emma's mind had been unfortunately poisoned by a destructive passion for dress and show, she had long entertained a most perfect respect for her friend's intrinsic qualifications.

To our young friends, who had been so long shut up from the world, it was very amusing to hear the many anecdotes which the strangers had to relate, of the busy world of London: and when the time of departure arrived, they took their leave, after having mutually given and received pleasure. But on their arrival at home, a very different scene awaited them; for, on entering the house, the first object which met their eyes was Miss Hardy stretched on the floor weltering in blood. A scream of horror and agony, which they both uttered, recalled the servant whom Mrs. Sams had sent to see them home, and he kindly offered any assistance in his power. Emma's first wish was to have her aunt raised from the floor; but Fanny, to whom it occurred that she must have broken a blood-vessel, advised that she should remain where she was till a surgeon could be brought; for whom the servant

immediately went. Painfully and anxiously was the time spent by the two weeping girls till his return. The object which they saw before them, they only now viewed as an indulgent and affectionate relative, or as the sister of a beloved benefactor; all her faults and imperfections were forgotten, and they felt as though she was the only being on earth to whom they had to cling for protection. Though apparently so to them, it was not long before the surgeon arrived; and the good Mrs. Sams, for whom the servant had next gone, was not long after him. The surgeon gave it as his opinion that Miss Hardy had been seized with an epileptic fit, in which she had broken a blood-vessel, which had occasioned the loss of so much blood as to bring her life in the most imminent danger. He forbade her being moved any farther than merely to be placed upon a bed, which he caused to be brought down stairs and laid on the parlour floor. After some time she recovered her consciousness, but was positively forbidden to speak; for, if the bleeding returned, she was assured nothing could save her. This motive was sufficient to impose silence, even on her refractory spirit; and as she lay motionless, and the picture of death, her tender nurses took their places by her side. Mrs. Sams was so kind as to remain with them most of the night; when, finding that the

bleeding did not return, she took her leave, promising to come and see them frequently, and comforting them with assurances of every assistance which it was in her power to afford them. Three days and nights were passed by the young nurses with very little interval of rest, in the most extreme anxiety, particularly on Fanny's part, who felt the dread of seeing Emma, whose health could not possibly be established, sink under such extraordinary exertion and uneasiness.

With the most persuasive eloquence, she entreated Emma to take care of herself for her sake, if not for her own: and, as the most likely argument to operate on the mind of her friend, she represented the forlorn and distressing situation in which she should be involved, if the only person to whom she could look for occasional help should be deprived of the power of affording it. By such reasoning, she at length prevailed upon Emma to take double the time for rest that she did: and this success added to the hope which was now given of Miss Hardy's at least partial recovery, gave Fanny renewed strength to go through her fatigue.

The first use which the invalid made of her permission to speak a little, and to rise for a short time, was, to beg to be removed up stairs; for her prevailing propensities still clinging to her, she was in

dread of any stranger coming in, and finding her in so strange a situation as in a bed on the floor ; with which change, after a little longer time, she was gratified. Though her life had for a time been spared, the surgeon gave little hope of her ultimate recovery : for her constitution had received such a shock as it did not seem at all likely to be able long to contend against, though she might, it was thought, linger some time in the state in which she then was. But the fatigue and anxiety which the young friends had to bear during the time that she lay in an apparently dying state, were trifling to what they had to encounter in the weak, fretful, and irritable situation that succeeded. When nothing could be done to give her ease, she blamed the manner of its being attempted,—not the diseased state of her own body : and when her sickly appetite revolted at food, she attributed it to the manner of its being cooked ; though even Mrs. Sams, who was a professed judge in such matters, said that nothing could exceed the niceness with which it was done. Nor did she ever seem to recollect, when some little nicety was every day bought to tempt her sickly appetite, that those who procured it must have deprived themselves almost of necessities to enable them to obtain it for her. They now found the use of the money which their work had procured them ; for

though they had had the supply of their quarterly allowance, the numerous expenses attending on sickness, and the heavy bill which they knew they must expect from the surgeon, would, they were very sure, consume nearly the whole of it. It was true, Mrs. Sams was very kind to them, and gave them many helps, as well as promised them further assistance both from Mrs. Chaters, the lady with whom she lived, and Mrs. Montague, a lady whom she knew to have a character for great benevolence, and who was come down with her mistress ; yet it was more grateful to both Fanny and Emma's feelings to think of getting money more independently ; for, in the pride of independence, even Fanny thought it right to indulge.

“ We certainly ought to be very grateful to the kind friends who are willing to help us,” said Emma ; “ but yet I own, I would rather work from morning till night, than be obliged to the charity of any one. You smile, Fanny,” added she, looking at her friend ; “ and I know what your look says.”

“ And what does it say ?” asked Fanny.

“ It implies,” answered Emma, “ that in spite of all my resolutions of amendment, I have not yet cured myself of my pride.”

“ No,” said Fanny ; “ you either do not understand my looks, or else they are not a true index

of my mind ; for if you had read my thoughts in my eyes, as you sometimes say you can do, you would have observed nothing but pleasure at finding that you had substituted a noble independence of spirit, in the place of that kind of pride which was unworthy of such a mind as yours."

It was now determined between them, that application should again be made to Mrs. Sams, to endeavour to procure them some employment, and that one of them should work, and the other act as nurse, alternately.

While they were thus engaged in laying their plan of proceeding, the sound of an uncommonly sweet female voice made Fanny start.

"Why do you start so?" asked Emma, looking at her friend with surprise.

"Because," replied Fanny, "that sweet voice seemed to be so near that I imagined it was directed to one of us ; but I see," added she, rising, and looking out of the window, "that I was mistaken, though these two ladies, to one of whom it must belong, are coming here ; so I think I had better go up stairs before they come in, lest your aunt should want any thing, and you are sufficient, without showing them any disrespect, to receive them." So saying, Fanny ran up stairs, in spite of the wish which she felt to see more of the lady whose voice

had attracted her attention ; and on their knocking almost instantly afterward, Emma, without thinking any further of her dress than to consider that it was neat and clean, and that she need not therefore be ashamed of it, hastened to admit them. They introduced themselves by saying that they had heard from Mrs. Sams of Miss Hardy's illness ; and had come to express their wish to be of service in any way that should be pointed out. Emma, who had conquered the only defect of manner which she had possessed, in overcoming her solicitude about the appearance she made, answered them with modest frankness, and acknowledged the determination which herself and sister (for ever since their removal to Ipswich, the friends had gratified themselves by passing for sisters, Fanny consequently going by the name of Hardy) had that morning made of applying to Mrs. Sams to assist them in procuring for them some work. Mrs. Chaters (for it has, no doubt, already been concluded who the visitors were) gladly promised to furnish them with as much work as they should be able to accomplish ; "but," added she, looking at the pictures which adorned their little parlour, "it is a pity you should spend your time on mere needle-work, if these beautiful drawings are yours."

Emma said they were her own and sister's per-

formances ; and took great pleasure in telling which were Fanny's, though she could not but see that they evidently were considered the best. Mrs. Montague would have engaged them to do a set of landscapes in imitation of Morland, for her little girls to copy : but Emma declined undertaking at present any thing which required so much attention, as her aunt so frequently required the attendance of both, that it would hardly be possible to do them justice ; but offered, in a very polite and modest manner, whatever they had for the use of the young ladies. Mrs. Montague acknowledged her politeness with great sweetness ; and said, she would so far avail herself of it as to send her little girls to see the drawings, with which she was sure they would be exceedingly delighted. After expressing themselves much pleased with every thing about the little cottage, which they rejoiced to see in such beautiful order, as it was a spot to which they had always been partial, they took their leave, promising to send Mrs. Sams and the children, in the afternoon, with some work. As soon as they were gone, Emma hastened up stairs to give an account of the visit, of which she knew it would give her aunt pleasure to hear, and related all that passed with great minuteness. And scarcely stopping to draw her breath,—“Mrs. Chaters is a very nice woman,” said she,

“she looks very good-tempered and amiable ; but as to Mrs. Montague, she is the sweetest woman I ever saw. She is not what one would call handsome, but she has such sweetness of look and manner, and such a musical voice ; and as to her eyes, Fanny, they are just like yours.”

“Indeed,” said Fanny, smiling ; “you are determined to make me admire her even before I see her, I find.”

“You do not need to smile, Fanny, and set it down for my partiality ; for indeed it is true.”

“I wish,” said Miss Hardy, whom Emma had been helping to prop up with pillows in her chair, while she was giving the account of her visiters, “I wish, Emma, you would take as much pains to make me comfortable as you do to flatter Fanny. This pillow is not at all comfortable ; you did not shake it before you put it under my head.”

“Yes, indeed, aunt, I did,” answered Emma, with earnestness ; for she was apt sometimes to attempt to convince her that she was mistaken, not aware that invalids can seldom bear to be contradicted ; and that the part of a tender nurse is to indulge their little fancies, and administer with readiness to their many wants ; “indeed, aunt, I shook it very well, and put it exactly where you desired.—You need not look at me, Fanny,” added

she, "I see I was wrong ; you would have altered the pillow without saying any thing about it."

"Yes," said Miss Hardy, "you are far short of Fanny as a nurse."

"I know I am;" replied her niece; "I am far short of her in many things, but intend to be equal to her soon."

"If you go on as you have done lately," returned Fanny, with a look of delighted admiration at her friend's unaffected frankness, "I wish I may not become envious of your very great superiority."

"That you must take care of," answered Emma, playfully; "for, as I intend to make you my guide and pattern in all things, I shall then have to turn envious too."

In the afternoon, Mrs. Sams came, according to appointment, with the promised work, accompanied by Mrs. Montague's daughters; who were two very pleasant, sensible-looking little girls, of about seven and nine years of age. Fanny was much pleased with their appearance and manner, which were those of children accustomed to think and speak for themselves; but without any tincture of either forwardness or affectation. She took great pains to show them all the drawings that she and Emma had, which they seemed to be much interested in examining; and as there was yet a portfolio uninspected when

Mrs. Sams thought it time to return home, Fanny proposed that they should take it with them, and examine it at their leisure, which they joyfully accepted.

“We will ask mamma’s leave to bring it back ourselves,” said Harriet, the eldest, “when we shall get another sight of our pretty cottage.” Fanny and Emma both assured them that they should be glad to see them at any time ; and the little Isabella said she would beg of mamma, to let them come always with Mrs. Sams.

“What nice little girls they are !” said Fanny, when they were gone ; “they are just reared as children ought to be, neither foolishly backward nor impertinently forward.”

“Yes,” replied Emma, “they are, I think, like what you must have been when you were a child ; the little Isabella, in particular, seems just such a lively, engaging creature as my father used to describe you.”

Fanny smiled with affectionate gratitude at Emma’s readiness to acknowledge her merits ; and then asked her whether she chose to be nurse or workwoman for the remainder of the day.

“You may finish, if you please,” returned her friend, “as you have begun, as nurse to-day ; and then, to-morrow, I will try to fill that office as well

as you. I have often wondered how it happened that my aunt, who has always shown so strong a partiality for me, should like better to have you to attend upon her now when she is sick ; but I have found out to-day, that it is because you never contradict her ; that if she wants a thing one way, you never propose to her to have it another, but leave it to her to find out that it might be better."

A summons from the invalid put a stop to the conversation ; and the rest of the day was spent in peevish reflections and discontented murmurings on the part of Miss Hardy, and in gentle compliances and patient endurance on that of her attentive nurse.

The next day was Fanny's working day, which, in comparison, appeared to her a day of festivity and enjoyment ; for if she did not murmur at the vexations she met with, it was not because she did not feel them, but because she thought it her duty to bear with patience the failings of others, and to do good pleasantly, as well as readily.

Happening to be at a loss about the manner of doing the work which had been sent from the Hall, she was obliged to take a walk there, for more particular directions. Mrs. Sams, whom she asked to see, being engaged at the time, she was shown into her little parlour to wait till she was at leisure. It

was a beautiful morning, and as the window had been thrown open to admit air into the room, while a venetian blind, which hung down before it, prevented a distinct view from it, which was into a part of the grounds, it was not long before her ears were delighted with the sound of the same voice which had pleased her so much the day before ; and she found Mrs. Montague was sitting on a little hillock nearly opposite to the window, with a daughter on each side of her, to whom she was talking ; and it was not in Fanny's power to avoid hearing the conversation.

"But I must first know, my dear," said that lady, "how you got this paper, before I feel at liberty to read it. Was it in the portfolio which Miss Hardy gave you to bring home with you ?"

"No, mamma," answered Harriet, "Mrs. Sams gave it to me, and she said Miss Emma Hardy had copied it out for her. There was a paper with some verses written on it in the portfolio, but we did not think we had a right to read it, as Miss Hardy did not give us leave. Indeed, I dare say she did not know it was there, or else she would have taken it out, for Mrs. Sams says she is very modest."

"So she appears to be," said Mrs. Montague.

"But you have not seen her, mamma," rejoined

Isabella ; “ it is the pretty Miss Hardy who writes the verses.”

“ I think the one I saw very pretty,” answered her mother.

“ Oh ! but not so very pretty as her sister,” said Harriet : “ Mrs. Sams says she has as good a shaped mouth, and nose, and chin ; but then, mamma, if you were to see Miss Fanny Hardy, I am sure you would think you never saw such pretty eyes, or such a sweet countenance, or so fine a colour ; and she blushes so, when she is praised, though everybody says she is so very clever, that she does every thing well that she attempts. You have often said, mamma, that there were a great many things that you wished us to learn which you could not teach us yourself, and you wished you could get a nice governess to help you. — Oh ! how nice it would be if you could get Miss Hardy, for she understands a great many languages, and you know you say we must learn different languages ; and I am sure it would be pleasanter to learn of her than anybody else, excepting yourself.”

“ It would not do to decide upon so short an acquaintance,” replied Mrs. Montague, “ for it is necessary, Harriet, to have further evidence than mere looks before we determine a person’s character ; but as far as I can judge at present, either

she or her sister would be a most desirable acquisition to any family ; and I should be very happy to procure such an assistant in your education."

"But let it be Miss Fanny Hardy, mamma," said little Isabella ; "for we both like her the best. Besides, they call her Fanny ; and you know, mamma, that is such a pretty name."

"It is, certainly, my dear," returned her mother, smiling at the little girl's mode of reasoning ; "but now that we have discussed Miss Hardy's merits as a governess, down to her very name, we will next consider her as a poet."

She then unfolded the paper which Harriet had given her, and read the following little poem, which Fanny recognised as her own :—

ADDRESS TO A PRIMROSE BUD.

COME along, then, smiling flow'r,
Fav'rite of the vernal hour ;
Haste, thy yellow leaves display,
Little flow'ret, come away.
The cuckoo soon will seek the vale,
Where thy sweets perfume the gale,
And invite with curious note,
From a dull but mellow throat,
Every songster to prepare
For the parent's tender care.
At his call the whistling thrush,
On his fav'rite holly bush,
Will his nest prepare with glee,
And make a neighbour thus of thee.

The swallow too, from distant climes.
Will come to share our gayest times;
Truant, like the worldly crowd,
With their kind professions loud,
While summer lasts and flow'rets bloom—
But flies with the first threat'ning gloom,
Again to seek with flatt'ring smile
The gay and happy to beguile.
But for this, his selfishness,
Not a leaf his nest shall dress;
But against some tott'ring wall,
A muddy shell shall be his all.
Not so shall e'er the robin share,
Who staid our gloomy months to cheer,
And kindly tried the winter long
To cheer its darkness with his song.
When for him no food is found,
When winter's frosts lock up the ground,
We'll take him to our friendly shed,
And feed him with the crumbling bread.
And when his song no more we need,
He to the woods shall fly with speed;
There to choose some kindred fair,
With him each pleasing task to share;
And ev'ry hardship to atone
With heart as tender as his own.
Like his is gentle friendship's part,
So dear to ev'ry feeling heart;
Gay in sunshine, but when grief
Seeks from sympathy relief,
It assumes each tender care,
Strives our inward griefs to share,
And exerts each little art
To relieve the bursting heart;
Seeks its sorrows to beguile,
And forces through its tears a smile.

Mrs. Montague had scarcely finished reading the little poem, when Mrs. Sams entered the room, who was struck with the more than common colour of Fanny's cheek, without knowing the circumstance which had given rise to it. The modest girl had heard with a variety of emotions the praises to which she had been an unavoidable listener ; while her heart swelled with gratitude alternately to that great Being through whose providence she had been placed in situations in which she had been enabled to learn the practice of her duty, and to the kind friends, who had been the instruments of implanting and fostering every virtuous impression in her youthful mind.

“ Oh ! my dear aunt, and my beloved benefactor,” she inwardly exclaimed, “ how would your hearts have rejoiced to hear your Fanny, the child of your bounty and tenderness, thus approved and respected ! May I never forget that the only way I have of showing my gratitude is, by being as good and virtuous as you endeavoured to make me ! May I act so as to secure the happiness of meeting you in another world ; for here, alas ! I fear you both are equally removed from me ! ”

These reflections gave a pensiveness to Fanny's manner, so unlike her usual vivacity, that it made Mrs. Sams question her very closely if she felt her-

self well : but being assured she was perfectly so, though hearing that Miss Hardy was weaker than ever, and declining very rapidly, she attributed Fanny's change of manner to that cause, and made no further remarks upon it.

Her errand being accomplished, Fanny returned home, and hastened with the most indefatigable diligence to get forward with her work. She observed with affectionate pleasure the great improvement in Emma's manner to her aunt ; and only wondered that it was not more thankfully acknowledged by the invalid, who, much to Fanny's surprise, appeared very unconscious of her approaching dissolution, though her extreme weakness, which rendered her unable to sit up at all, seemed little calculated to meet the change of season which was now fast advancing. Her whole thoughts seemed occupied in projecting schemes of aggrandizing herself and niece (of which Fanny seldom came in for any portion) ; for the kindness of Mrs. Chaters and Mrs. Montague had again raised her hopes and excited her ambition ; and Fanny shuddered to observe, while on the brink of the grave, how much her heart still clung to all the vanities of the world. A mind so disposed was ill calculated to bear with patience the trials of sickness and disease ; and she felt herself at full liberty to indulge the peevishness of her temper

without restraint; for the patient and submissive girls only strove which could accommodate herself most entirely to her wishes. At length her impatience at feeling her increasing weakness induced her to question her medical attendant more closely than usual; he gave her to understand that he considered her recovery as past hope; and that he did not even expect that she would be able to survive many weeks.

Nothing could show a more striking example of the forlorn state of that heart which has not made religion its governing principle through life, than this poor woman's now exhibited. Without having any habitual or great vice to reflect upon, her death-bed was dreary and disconsolate. She had not, in her better days, taken any pains to cherish a principle of religion in her heart; she was deplorably ignorant of the religion of the gospel; and now, when nothing else could comfort and support her, she in vain sought for consolation in principles which had never found root or nourishment in her mind. She blamed the surgeon for not sooner making her acquainted with her situation, that she might have had more time to prepare for it; not considering that a scriptural faith in the atoning merits of the Saviour of sinners, joined to a pious and Christian life, are

the only preparations which can effectually smooth and comfort the bed of death.

Her situation engaged the time of her young nurses so much, that their work went very slowly forward, and they became seriously apprehensive of being entirely destitute of money ; they therefore sat up the greatest part of two nights, for the purpose of finishing their work, which, when completed, Fanny hastened to take home ; supported with the hope that the profits of it would produce what would be sufficient for their present necessities, and that their benevolent neighbours would not fail to supply them with more. On her arrival at the Hall, her friend, Mrs. Sams, told her that her mistress had desired she might be informed when the work was brought home, as she wished to speak herself about some more ; and therefore begged she would be seated till she told Mrs. Chaters of her being there. Mrs. Sams soon returned, with a request from that lady that Fanny would go up into her dressing-room to her. Both she and Mrs. Montague wished to see the young workwoman, about whom they felt much interested, without giving her the pain of thinking she was sent for merely to be looked at ; they talked, therefore, to her for some time about work, before they entered upon any other subject. Fanny's manner, which was always unembarrassed

and gracefully simple, delighted the ladies exceedingly ; while their demeanour equally pleased her by its unassuming frankness and cordiality. Mrs. Montague, after thanking her with great sweetness for her attention to her little girls, said, with a smile, " You won their hearts so entirely, that they promised me great pleasure in seeing you, Miss Hardy ; and I believe that I feel more even than they anticipated : you are so strikingly like a very dear friend of mine, that had I not known your name to be Hardy, I should scarcely have been able to persuade myself that you were not nearly related to her."

" It is not at all likely that I should be related to any friend of yours, ma'am," said Fanny, with modest frankness ; " for though my real name is not Hardy, my origin is much lower than even my present situation."

" Are you not Mr. Hardy's daughter?" asked Mrs. Montague, with eagerness.

" No, ma'am," replied Fanny, whose mind was superior to the little pride of feeling ashamed to acknowledge her obligations to her benefactor ; " I am only the daughter of his adoption, the child of his benevolence and bounty."

" Will you oblige me with your real name?"

" I believe it to be Frances Edwin, ma'am,"

answered Fanny, rather surprised at Mrs. Montague's manner.

"And where was you born?"

"That, ma'am," replied Fanny, "I cannot tell; for the only thing that I can remember of my infant years is, that I lived in the cottage in which we at present reside, with an aunt who was very kind to me."

"Is she still living?" asked Mrs. Montague, increasing animation gradually lighting up her eyes at every answer she received.

"Alas!" answered Fanny, "of that I am ignorant: she left me to attend upon a lady who was sick, with a promise of soon returning; but if she ever did so, it was not till after all traces of me were lost, so that though she may still be living, I fear I must ever be a stranger to her."

Fanny's voice faltered as she spoke; and the tears, which the recollection of her aunt, even at so late a period, scarcely ever failed to produce, glistened in her eyes.

"My dear girl," said Mrs. Montague, taking her affectionately by the hand, "the tender and grateful remembrance you retain of so excellent a relation proves you worthy of the pleasure I am happy in having it in my power to communicate. Your aunt Jane is the friend of whom you reminded me the

moment I saw you ; and I have every reason to believe that she is not only alive and well, but will soon have it in her power to embrace a niece whom she tenderly loves, though she has long mourned her as lost to her in this world."

An exclamation of joy was all the agitated Fanny could utter, while a flood of tears came seasonably to her relief.

Mrs. Montague knew the human heart too well to attempt to check this overflow of feeling, but allowed her to indulge her tears for some time without interruption ; and then gradually composed her mind, by drawing her into a more minute account of the circumstances of her short but eventful life.

"It is very natural," said the benevolent Mrs. Montague, when Fanny had related her own little history, and was capable of listening with composure, "it is very natural that you should be desirous, in return, of knowing some particulars of a relation who is so nearly a stranger to you ; and as few persons, I believe, are better acquainted with her history than myself, I shall have great pleasure in giving you an account of her.

"Frances and Jane Markland, which were the names of your mother and aunt, were the daughters of a poor but very respectable labourer, who worked for a farmer on my father's estate in the neigh-

bourhood of London; and were first introduced to my mother's notice by being admitted into a school which she had established for the benefit of the neighbouring poor children. Your mother, who was several years older than your aunt, did not remain very long at school, for she was soon thought fit for service. And though she removed, with the family she served, as far as this town, my mother had frequently the satisfaction of hearing that she conducted herself exceedingly well. And when she married, though her choice did not prove equal to her deserts, she never failed to fulfil her duty as a wife, as faithfully as she had acted in the capacity of a servant. It was not long before your aunt gave such signs of extraordinary abilities and uncommonly amiable disposition, that my mother was induced to remove her to a higher school, in which she acquitted herself with equal credit. All the time that she was not engaged at school she spent with us; for I forgot to tell you that your grandfather, who was her only surviving parent, died much about the time your mother went to service. My sister, who was about your aunt's age, and myself, who was only fourteen months younger, soon became exceedingly attached to her, and, at our particular request, when she was taken from school, she was retained in the family, at first as our maid; but her amiable

manners and disposition, and superior abilities, soon induced us to treat her more as a companion and friend. My sister had always been exceedingly delicate, and her ill health made your aunt's gentle attention and engaging vivacity so necessary to her comfort, that she scarcely ever was happy when she was out of her sight. My mother's health being almost as delicate as my sister's, we lived very privately; and our society knew few additions, excepting in the company of a cousin, the only son to a brother of my dear mother's. This amiable young man, though heir to a very large fortune, had no greater pleasure than in being with us, and in sharing, with Jane and myself, the office of amusing the invalids. I had observed for some time, that your aunt's spirits were not so good as usual, and had often endeavoured to find out the cause. At length she told me, one day, that she had heard that her sister was exceedingly ill, and as her complaint was believed to be consumptive, she thought it her duty to go to see her and attend upon her. Though I was sure this would be a severe trial to my poor sister, I felt that the request was too reasonable to be unwilling to promise to do what I could, to reconcile her mind to it. My sister, as I expected, showed great concern at being obliged to part with her favourite, but had always too much consideration

for the feelings of others to attempt to oppose it ; and Jane took her leave in the course of a day or two.

“The first letter which my sister received from her after her arrival at Ipswich introduced you, my dear Fanny, to our acquaintance, in a very interesting point of view. She said, that on entering the room where your mother was, she saw her sitting in an arm-chair, supported by pillows ; while a little girl, about three years old, was seated on a stool at her feet, rubbing her mother’s swollen legs with her little hands, and asking every minute, in a sweet affectionate voice, if she were any better. Your aunt was only in time to receive the last breath of her dying sister, and to sooth her latter moments with a promise of being a mother to her little girl. Your grief was excessive when you found that your mother could no longer look at or answer you ; but when removed from her, you soon, with the facility so common to infancy, made a transfer of your affections to your aunt ; which was the less remarkable, as the two sisters were always considered very much like each other. On hearing of your mother’s death, we never doubted but that your aunt would soon return to us ; we were, however, exceedingly concerned and surprised on receiving a letter from her, saying, that it was her intention to stay and take the

charge of her little niece ; and though we urged her to bring the child with her, she declined, saying she did not think it right to remove you from where you would be under your father's observation, and therefore intended to remain in the neighbourhood of Ipswich. This apparently unkind behaviour of your aunt's, so different from her former manner, made my sister feel even offended for some time at her favourite. My mother, however, who had less irritable feelings and a cooler judgment, persuaded that she had some sufficient motive for what she had decided upon, though perhaps not such a one as she felt herself at liberty to disclose, wrote immediately to say, that the sum of thirty pounds a year, which she had been in the habit for some years of receiving, should be regularly paid ; and applying at the same time to Mrs. Chaters to furnish her with a house, it was not long before your aunt and yourself were settled in the little cottage. My sister's resentment could not last long against one she so tenderly loved ; and a regular correspondence was kept up between them for two years ; your aunt often making her letters exceedingly entertaining, by giving an account of the engaging qualities and amiable disposition of her little charge, to whom she grew every day more and more attached. At the end of that time, my sister's health grew so much worse, that her physicians de-

clared that nothing but an immediate removal to a foreign climate could possibly give her a chance of life. My anxiety and uneasiness at this intelligence cannot be described. I was equally unable to bear the idea of leaving my beloved mother in the state in which she then was, or sending an almost equally dear sister to die, perhaps, among strangers, unattended by any one whom she loved. My sister herself relieved my perplexity, by saying, that if Jane Markland could be prevailed upon to attend her, she should not have the least hesitation in going wherever she was ordered. I immediately wrote to your aunt to make the request, promising that when my dear mother no longer called for my attendance, which it was impossible she could long require, I should hasten without loss of time to relieve her from her charge. I received by return of post a cheerful and ready compliance from her; your father, as she informed me, having just married again, she could leave you with him, without much uneasiness, for the short time she was likely to be absent. How little did I suspect at the time, my dear Fanny, that this request of mine would be the means of separating for years two who were so well calculated to give pleasure to each other. Now, however, that I know its effect, I know also that I shall be the happy instrument of reuniting you, and can

only feel pleasure.—But to go on with my history. After the travellers had been absent about three months, I received a letter from your aunt, requesting I would make inquiries about her brother-in-law; to whom she had written two or three times without having had any answer, and she now became exceedingly anxious to hear how you were going on. The letter happening to arrive on the very day on which my beloved mother expired, it is not, I hope, very inexcusable that I should not have attended to the commission for a week or two. I then wrote to your father, according to the direction which your aunt had given me, saying, that I was on the point of setting off for Lisbon, and should be happy to take an account of himself and family to his sister. No answer, however, arriving to my letter, I determined to go myself, and gain the information which I knew your aunt was so desirous of possessing; and intended, if your father would part with you, to take you with me to Portugal, as the only means of retaining our friend with us. On my arrival, however, at Ipswich, I found that your father had been lost a short time before at sea; and that his wife, for I cannot profane the name of mother by calling her yours, had set off with you the day before, to join her own relations at Reading. My friend Mrs. Chaters, happening at the very time to

come down from London, I was induced to stay with her a week or two ; and then proceeded to Reading, to make inquiries according to the directions which I had received concerning your situation. After a great deal of difficulty, I discovered the woman, and was much shocked to hear from her that you had been seized on the road thither with a malignant fever, of which you had died before she could get you to the end of the journey. Exceedingly concerned to have so melancholy a piece of intelligence to convey to our friend, I set off on my journey ; and in due time arrived at Lisbon, where I had the pleasure to find my sister much improved with her short residence in a warmer climate. Your aunt's distress was extreme at the account of the death of her little favourite ; and, as your loss deprived her of every wish to return to her native country, she readily agreed to remain with my sister ; who determined to continue at Lisbon till her constitution was so strengthened as to enable her to enjoy life in her native country. My dear mother, before her death, had endeavoured to show her sense of your aunt's worth by leaving her a legacy of a thousand pounds. This was a gratification to her noble mind, not only as a mark of respect from her patroness, but, as it served to take off that feeling of dependence which must ever be

galling to such a temper as hers. It was not long before she received a still further and more considerable addition to her property, in a manner which served to show, in a stronger light than we had ever before been witness to, the superior excellence of her character. My cousin, of whom I have before spoken, died soon after I left England; having first made a will, in which he bequeathed to your aunt the sum of three thousand pounds, being all that he possessed independent of his father, after declaring that, impressed with a sense of her virtues and attractions, it had been his wish to make her his wife; had she not steadily withstood all his solicitations, from a determination never to be the means of planting discord in a family to which she was so much obliged. This circumstance discovered to us at once the cause of our dear Jane's temporary alienation from us; and, removing the only inconsistency which we had ever perceived in her, raised her higher than ever in our esteem. Such a succession of distressing events, for it was not indifference which made her refuse my cousin's proposals, had, for some time, a considerable effect upon her health; but a pious resignation to the decrees of Providence in time overcame the shock; and though she has never, I think, since that time, possessed such a flow of vivacity, she is uniformly contented and

cheerful. I remained with them about a year, at the end of which time Mr. Montague came over for me; and as soon as we were married, we returned to England. We have made frequent trips over to see them; and last year, when there, we found my sister so stout and well, that it was determined she should this summer return to make a trial of her native air. It has happened that some cross accidents have, one after another, obliged the travellers to be much later in the summer than they intended; but I yesterday received a letter, informing me, that they were just going on board with a fair wind, and expected to be landed in England as soon as I could receive that intelligence. And as Mr. Montague is already at Falmouth, waiting to receive them and to conduct them to London, it is my intention to set off to-morrow morning to join them there; and I shall be very happy, my dear Fanny, to take you with me, and restore you to the relation from whom I was originally the means of separating you."

Fanny's heart beat high at the idea of seeing her long-lost aunt; and she was just upon the point of accepting Mrs. Montague's kind offer, when the recollection of Miss Hardy's dying situation occurred to her. Mrs. Montague, observing her sudden change of countenance, and conjecturing the cause, kindly tried to remove her difficulties.

“You know, my dear Fanny,” said she, “it is no longer necessary for you to observe the frugal plan you have hitherto maintained ; for your aunt, you are aware, is able, and I can answer with confidence for her being equally willing, to do all in her power to assist both you and your friends. I will, therefore, for the present be your banker, and enable you to procure a nurse to attend upon Miss Hardy, and relieve your young friend from all trouble and anxiety ; so that you need have no scruple in leaving her.”

Fanny hesitated for some minutes ; the temptation was very strong : she had never before felt so great a wish to gratify her own inclinations ; but the struggle was soon over.

“It is impossible for me to describe the pleasure which I should have in seeing, and being acknowledged by my dear aunt,” said she ; “for the account you have been so kind as to give me has confirmed the impression which I have had from my infancy of her character ; but I must not indulge my affection for one friend at the expense of my duty to others, to whom I owe every service that I can possibly render. We might hire a nurse for Miss Hardy, but she has been so long accustomed to Emma and myself, that I am very sure that no one else would be able to please her ; so that the fatigue

would all fall upon her niece. And though she would, as I know, be very willing to bear it for the sake of giving me pleasure, I should think myself inexcusable in throwing it upon her."

Fanny could have added, that Miss Hardy's temper was worse to bear than her weakness, and that was sure to fall entirely upon Emma in her absence; but she never spoke of the faults of others but from necessity. Mrs. Montague could not but admire the generosity and consideration which dictated Fanny's reply, and consequently forbore to urge her further: she insisted, however, upon her taking ten guineas, to answer their present expenses, and desired that a nurse might be procured, as she was well assured that such would be the wish of her friend.

Fanny now began to feel as though she had been unkind to Emma, in keeping her so long in ignorance of the happy discovery, and therefore rose to depart.

"If I must not take yourself," said Mrs. Montague, "you must at least give me a letter to convey to my friend, as evidence that I this time bring her a true report; for it is so different from the last which I was the means of conveying to her, that it will need some proof to substantiate it."

Fanny promised to comply with her request the

next morning; and after making the good Mrs. Sams a partaker of her happiness, she immediately hastened home. Emma had become very uneasy at the long absence of her friend, and eagerly inquired, as soon as Fanny entered the room, what had detained her; while Miss Hardy, with her usual peevishness, said, "Oh, she has met with something or other to amuse her, and forgot how we were spending our time at home." Without taking any notice of this unjust remark, Fanny hastened to give an account of the events of the morning. As soon as she came to the part where Mrs. Montague declared that her aunt was still living, and likely soon to be with her, Emma clasped her hands together in a transport of joy, and exclaimed, "Oh! how glad I am that she is found, and that she will, at least, see the effect of her early care of you!"

"I am certainly indebted to her for those qualities which first recommended me to your father's notice," said Fanny; "but it is to him I chiefly owe what little good there is about me; for without such care as his, my aunt's instructions would have had little chance of being long remembered."

"Then I suppose you will leave us directly," said Miss Hardy, whose selfishness was immediately alarmed at the idea of losing her best nurse.

"No, ma'am," returned the grateful and affection-

ate girl ; “ I am sure my dear aunt herself would have little pleasure in seeing me, if she found I had left you in your present situation ; as it would be a proof that I was but little deserving of all the kindness and generosity which have been shown towards me.”

Miss Hardy turned over, and a groan of contrition escaped her at the recollection of how little of that kindness had been bestowed by her.

“ Though I should feel the most sincere pleasure, my dear Fanny,” said Emma, as her friend finished her narrative, “ in bearing any inconvenience for the sake of procuring you pleasure, yet I will not offend your feelings so much as to endeavour to persuade you to leave us at such a time as this, even to meet your aunt Jane ; for I am sure it is inconsistent with your character to purchase pleasure to yourself at so dear a rate to your friends.”

“ How kindly do you judge of me,” said Fanny ; “ and how amiable a disposition do you show, in thus estimating mine. Oh ! that your dear father could see what his Emma now is ; how would his heart rejoice in his daughter !”

The recollection of the friend they had lost, mingled with that of the one just restored, gave a pleasing sadness to the feelings of these amiable girls ; and they wept, mingling feelings of regret with those of thankfulness.

The letter which Fanny prepared for Mrs. Montague to convey to her aunt contained an affectionate and unaffected expression of pleasure at the prospect of their reunion after so long a separation ; which she proved to have had little effect in erasing from her mind the recollection of her early and affectionate instructress. She regretted her inability to accept of Mrs. Montague's kind offer of taking her to pay her respects in person ; but spoke of the duties which detained her in such a manner, as to prove that she considered them as indispensable. She then gave a concise account of the events of her life, from the time of her aunt's leaving her ; in the course of which she took occasion to speak, with enthusiastic gratitude, of Mr. Hardy's benevolence, and Emma's sisterly affection, and left her aunt room to conjecture, from her silence only, that Miss Hardy had been less kind. She concluded with an assurance, that the time would seem very long to her, till she had it in her power to embrace the friend whom she had always so tenderly loved. And so in reality it proved ; for from the time that she saw Mrs. Montague depart, every day seemed a week in Fanny's imagination. She felt persuaded that her aunt would answer her letter immediately ; and, contrary to her usual habits, she spent hours in list-

less expectation, and watching for she scarcely knew what.

They had, in compliance with Mrs. Montague's request, engaged a nurse to attend upon Miss Hardy; which left Fanny more leisure than was at this time desirable, for she had never before been so little inclined to turn it to advantage, by employing it in self-improvement. Mrs. Montague had been gone about a week when Miss Hardy, who had declined very rapidly in that time, showed such signs of almost immediate dissolution, that their kind friend Mrs. Sams had been with them nearly the whole of the day. As she did not suffer any pain, but was almost constantly in a sort of slumber, she required little attendance from her nurses; who, however, seldom left her room for a moment. While she lay in this state, Fanny, by way of a slight change of posture, walked to the window, where she stood for some time with her eyes fixed on the road, but her mind occupied with the scene of death which was then so near. She was, however, in a few minutes attracted with the appearance of a female, whose look interested her much, who was hastening along the lane; and, though her mind was so much engaged with subjects of a different nature, she could not but admire her elegant figure and graceful walk. Fanny's attention was still more excited by

seeing her come towards the cottage : but on her entering the little garden, and casting her eyes up to the bed-room window, she hastily threw a long white veil from her face, when Fanny's faithful memory immediately discovered the well-remembered features of her aunt Jane. She had just enough of presence of mind to avoid an exclamation ; but running out of the room, she was in an instant, and almost without a word having been spoken by either, locked in her aunt's arms. The excess of joy, as that of grief, is seldom loquacious ; and there had scarcely a connected sentence passed between them, when Emma, who had been surprised by Fanny's sudden manner of quitting the room, followed her down to learn the cause. Fanny immediately introduced her to her aunt, by whom she was received with scarcely less pleasure than her niece had been. When they became more composed, Miss Markland (for we must now drop the title of aunt Jane), informed her young friends, that she and her companions had arrived in London the day before Mrs. Montague joined them ; and she had no sooner heard that lady's welcome intelligence, and read her niece's letter, than she determined to avail herself of Mrs. Chaters's kindness, who had begged, if she felt inclined to come to her niece, that she would make her house her home.

“I resolved, therefore,” added Miss Markland, “to come down immediately, and assist you in performing the last duties to Miss Hardy; and then conduct you to town, where my friend Miss Clareville is scarcely less anxious to see you than I was myself. Indeed, nothing I believe but her sister’s superior claims, from whom she has been so long absent, could have prevented her from coming down with me.”

As Miss Markland ceased speaking, a sound of feet in the room above informed them that Miss Hardy was awake; and Emma hastened up stairs to attend her, but soon returned, saying, that as she thought it would give her aunt pleasure to hear that they had got another protectress at the time they were about to be deprived of her, she had told her of Miss Markland’s arrival. Her aunt had immediately requested to see her: she obeyed the summons with the greatest readiness, accompanied by the two girls. As she entered the room, the invalid made a feeble effort to hold out her hand to her. Miss Markland observed the attempt, and took it in an affectionate and respectful manner. Miss Hardy laboured for some time before she was able to speak; at length, in scarcely articulate words, she said, “You will be a friend to my poor Emma?”

"You may depend upon it, my dear madam," replied Miss Markland, with earnestness, "that your niece shall share equally with my own, both in my affection and property; nor shall I ever consider that any thing which I can do for Emma will ever repay my obligations for the kindness which Fanny has received."

"She owes me nothing," said Miss Hardy, making a violent effort to speak; "my heart was hardened against her, and I used her cruelly; but she forgot it all with an angel's sweetness, and has since been a blessing to both Emma and me. She has forgiven me; ah! that I could forgive myself." Nature could do no more; the unhappy woman closed her eyes, and after a few faint struggles expired.

It was impossible to witness the last moments of a person with whom they had been so long and so closely connected, without considerable emotion; and Fanny and Emma hung over the dead body with tears of unaffected grief. Miss Markland knew too well how to enter into their feelings to attempt to check them: till the nurse and Mrs. Sams wishing to perform the necessary offices, she drew them gently away from the scene of death.

As soon as Mrs. Chaters heard of Miss Hardy's death, she kindly invited the girls to the Hall, but

they both positively refused to leave the cottage so long as Miss Hardy was in it ; and Miss Markland, respecting the motives which induced them to remain, forbore to urge them. The funeral was plain ; but accompanied with every proper mark of attention and respect to the memory of the deceased ; and as soon as it was over, the girls accompanied Miss Markland to the Hall, where they only staid long enough to rest themselves after their fatigue and anxiety, and to prepare their mourning before they set out for London.

While virtue thus furnished its own reward in the peace of a quiet conscience, the two young persons also enjoyed a very abundant recompense for their conduct in the kindness and attention which they received from their new friends ; and every day's observation served to increase the esteem and admiration of all parties. Fanny saw with peculiar interest, that her childish memory had retained a faithful recollection of her aunt's amiable manners and disposition ; and she felt that it would be her highest ambition to become such a woman, little conscious how near a resemblance her other friends already discovered between the aunt and niece. Emma, whose enthusiastic admiration of Fanny scarcely knew moderate bounds, took such delight in relating anecdotes which served to illustrate her

excellences, though they often told to her own disadvantage, that, though less strikingly clever, and less conspicuously amiable, she was loved and admired for her unaffected ingenuousness and warmth of character. The time passed on so pleasantly, that several weeks elapsed before Miss Clareville and Miss Markland, who still were determined to continue together, had ever talked of forming an establishment of their own. One day, however, when they were all assembled in Mrs. Montague's dressing-room, Miss Clareville said, "I think, Jane, we have troubled my sister long enough with our company ; and having now seen all the friends to whom she wished to introduce us, it is time we should begin to think of providing a house for our large family."

"That is a proposal which I have long dreaded to hear," said Mrs. Montague ; "I am determined, however, if possible, not to part with you all, and have been thinking, therefore, my dear Emma," added she, turning to Emma, who sat near her, "as you seem the most unconnected of the party, if I could prevail upon you to become a part of my family, and join me in the education of these two little girls, it would be a very great acquisition to both them and me."

"You must not, Mrs. Montague," said Miss Markland, before Emma had time to reply, "you

must not talk of Emma's being unconnected, for the daughter of Mr. Hardy can never be otherwise than nearly and dearly connected with me. And, though I am sure she would be very happy with you, I must beg leave to decline your kind offer for her, at least for a twelvemonth to come; as I consider her health to be still so delicate, that she requires more indulgence than she would allow herself, after engaging in an office of trust."

"Thank you, my dear aunt," said Fanny, with animation, "for being so kindly considerate. You only do Emma justice in believing she would be so conscientiously scrupulous in the performance of her duty, that even Mrs. Montague's kindness would not be able to prevent her from doing more than her health could bear. But now," added she, turning to Mrs. Montague, and a modest blush overspreading her features as she spoke, "since we have decided upon Emma's not accepting your kind offer, will you allow me, ma'am, to propose myself as a substitute?"

"It is what I certainly should consider myself very fortunate in obtaining," replied Mrs. Montague: "but I am almost afraid to think of again being the means of separating the aunt from the niece."

"And would you leave me again so soon, Fanny?" asked Miss Markland in a reproachful tone. "Will you again be a runaway?"

“Take care,” said Fanny, playfully, lest I turn the tables, and prove you to have been the runaway! For, as you must know, you left me at the little cottage, and there you found me again, when you came back to it. But,” added she, in a graver tone, “the separation, which is not likely to be more than the length of a street, will be so trifling as scarcely to deserve the name. And as I think it right, while I am young and strong, to do something for myself, rather than be an unnecessary burden upon you, it would be a pity, I am sure, to lose so desirable an opportunity as the present.”

“Though my inclination is strongly against you, Fanny,” said Miss Markland, “my judgment so fully approves of your arguments, that I will make no further opposition.”

“And though it disappoints me of a part of the pleasure I thought myself secure of, in having so large and pleasant a family about me,” added Miss Clareville, “I cannot possibly object to what I know will be so much to the advantage of those most dear to me.”

“But do you think, Fanny,” said Emma, “that I can consent to live at my ease, while you are working for your bread?”

“I do not apprehend,” replied Fanny, smiling, “that my bread will be earned with any more labour than will barely serve to make it sweeter; nor do I

wish you not to follow my example when you are stronger. At present, however, you must submit to remain with my aunt, and repay her for her kindness to me, by giving her an opportunity of being equally so to you."

Mrs. Montague's little girls had listened with great anxiety to this contest between the two young friends. Harriet discovered by her countenance only the interest which she felt; but the little Isabella, less accustomed to govern her feelings, whispered, "I hope, mamma, Miss Edwin will stay with us; do not you?" Her mother gave her a motion for silence, but not before Emma had observed and understood her anxiety.

"I will dispute the subject no longer with you, Fanny," said she; "for I see that this little girl wishes for you, and I will not disappoint her."

The little girl, fearful that she had offended Emma, whom she really loved, though in a less ardent degree than she loved Fanny, ran to her, and clasping her arms about her neck, said, "It is not that we do not love you very dearly, and should not like to have you with us always, but—"

"But you have been more clever at finding out Miss Edwin's ornaments than I was at your age," said Emma, interrupting her, and kissing her affectionately.

“What do you mean?” asked Isabella.

“When my father first told me he had brought a little play-fellow that he hoped I should be very fond of,” replied Emma, “I asked if she was handsomely dressed; for I was such a silly little girl as to think smart clothes the most becoming things in the world. He told me that she had some of the prettiest ornaments he had ever seen. I was exceedingly anxious to see my new companion, to determine whether I could get any like them; but when I found she was very meanly clothed, I began to think my father had only been jesting with me; and it was long before I found out what ornaments he referred to.”

“I dare say,” interrupted Harriet, “he meant that she was so sweet tempered and amiable.”

“Yes, my dear children,” said Mrs. Montague, “the rich may adorn themselves in gay clothes, and expensive trinkets; but *the noblest adorning is the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of God, of great price.*”

THE END.

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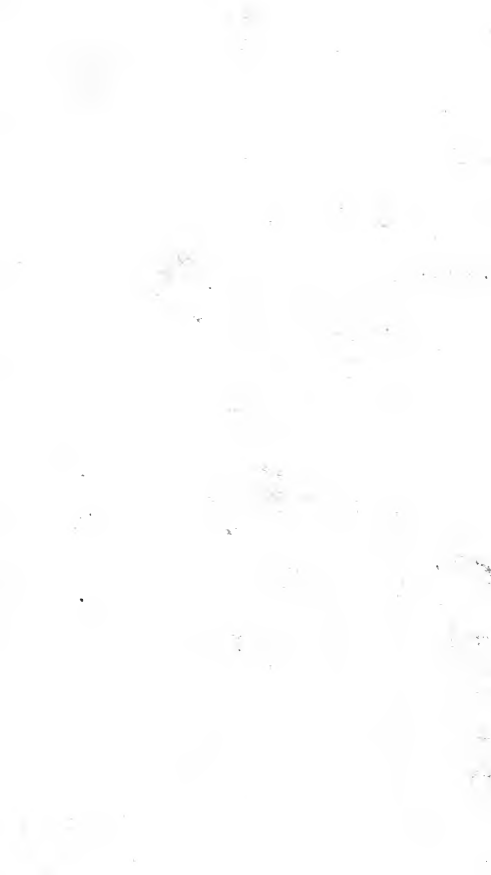
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